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THE
POETICAL WORKS

MATTHEW PRIOR.

COLLECTED WITH THE BEST COMMENTS

BY

THOMAS POPE, F.R.S. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON.

Printed at the Stanhope Press,

BY CHARLES WHITTINGHAM,

15, GOWER STREET.

FOR A. SHARPE AND S. C. L. & S. STABY,
AT THE SIGN OF THE FOUNTAIN, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.



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1807.

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IN THREE BOOKS.

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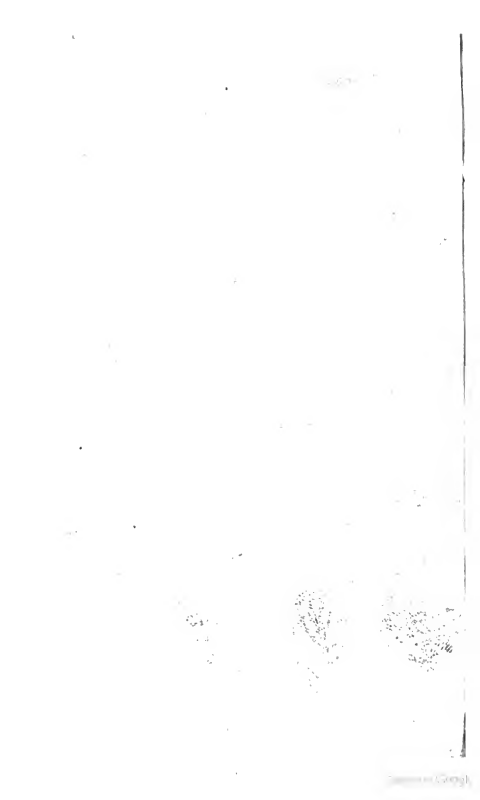
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SOLOMON

ON THE

VANITY OF THE WORLD.

A POEM. IN THREE BOOKS.

PREFACE.

It is hard for a man to speak of himself with any tolerable satisfaction or success: he can be no more pleased in blaming himself, than in reading a satire made on him by another; and though he may justly desire that a friend should praise him, yet if he makes his own panegyric, he will get very few to read it. It is harder for him to speak of his own writings. An author is in the condition of a culprit; the public are his judges: by allowing too much, and condescending too far, he may injure his own cause, and become a kind of *felo de se*; and by pleading and asserting too boldly, he may displease the court that sits upon him: his apology may only heighten his accusation. I would avoid these extremes; and though, I grant, it would not be very civil to trouble the reader with a long preface before he enters upon an indifferent poem, I would say something to persuade him to take as it is, or to excuse it for not being better.

The noble images and reflections, the profound reasonings upon human actions, and excellent precepts for the government of life, which are found in the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and other books commonly attributed to Solomon, afford subjects for finer poems in every kind than have, I think, as yet appeared in the Greek, Latin, or any modern language: how far they were verse in their original, is a dissertation not to be entered into at present.

Out of this great treasure, which lies heaped up together in a confused magnificence, above all order, I had a mind to collect and digest such observations and apothegms as most particularly tend to the proof of that great assertion, laid down in the beginning of the Ecclesiastes, 'All is vanity.'

Upon the subject thus chosen, such various images present themselves to a writer's mind, that he must find it easier to judge what should be rejected; than what ought to be received. The difficulty lies in drawing and disposing, or (as the painters term it) in grouping such a multitude of different objects, preserving still the justice and conformity of style and colouring, the *simplex duntaxat et unum*, which Horace prescribes as requisite to make the whole picture beautiful and perfect.

As precept, however true in theory, or useful in practice, would be but dry and tedious in verse, especially if the recital be long; I found it necessary to form some story, and give a kind of body to the Poem. Under what species it may be comprehended, whether Didascalical or Heroic, I leave

to the judgment of the critics, desiring them to be favourable in their censure, and not solicitous what the Poem is called, provided it may be accepted.

The chief personage or character in the Epic is always proportioned to the design of the work, to carry on the narration and the moral. Homer intended to show us, in his *Iliad*, that dissensions amongst great men obstruct the execution of the noblest enterprises, and tend to the ruin of a state or kingdom: his Achilles, therefore, is haughty and passionate, impatient of any restraint by laws, and arrogant in arms. In his *Odysses* the same poet endeavours to explain, that the hardest difficulties may be overcome by labour, and our fortune restored after the severest afflictions: Ulysses, therefore, is valiant, virtuous; and patient. Virgil's design was to tell us how, from a small colony established by the Trojans in Italy, the Roman empire rose, and from what ancient families Augustus (who was his prince and patron) descended. His hero, therefore, was to fight his way to the throne, still distinguished and protected by the favour of the gods. The poet, to this end, takes off from the vices of Achilles, and adds to the virtues of Ulysses; from both perfecting a character proper for his work in the person of Æneas.

As Virgil copied after Homer, other Epic poets have copied after them both. Tasso's *Gierusalemme Liberata* is directly Troy-town sacked, with this difference only, that the two chief characters in Homer, which the Latin poet had joined in one, the Italian has separated in his Godfrey and Rinaldo; but he makes them both carry on his work with very great success. Ronsard's *Franciade*, (in-

comparably good as far as it goes) is again Virgil's *Æneis*. His hero comes from a foreign country, settles a colony, and lays the foundation of a future empire. I instance in these as the greatest Italian and French poets in the Epic. In our language Spenser has not contented himself with this submissive manner of imitation; he launches out into very flowery paths, which still seem to conduct him into one great road. His *Fairy-Queen* (had it been finished) must have ended in the account which every knight was to give of his adventures, and in the accumulated praises of his heroine *Gloriana*. The whole would have been an heroic poem, but in another cast and figure than any that had ever been written before. Yet it is observable that every hero (as far as we can judge by the books still remaining) bears his distinguished character, and represents some particular virtue conducive to the whole design.

To bring this to our present subject. The pleasures of life do not compensate the miseries: age steals upon us unawares; and death, as the only cure of our ills, ought to be expected, but not feared. This instruction is to be illustrated by the action of some great person. Who, therefore, more proper for the business than Solomon himself? And why may he not be supposed now to repeat what, we take it for granted, he acted almost three thousand years since? If, in the fair situation where this prince was placed, he was acquainted with sorrow; if, endowed with the greatest perfections of Nature, and possessed of all the advantages of external condition, he could not find happiness; the rest of mankind may safely take

the Monarch's word for the truth of what he asserts, And the author who would persuade that we should bear the ills of life patiently, merely because Solomon felt the same, has a better argument than Lucretius had, when, in his imperious way, he at once convinces and commands that we ought to submit to death without repining because Epicurus died.

The whole Poem is a soliloquy : Solomon is the person that speaks: he is at once the hero and the author ; but he tells us very often what others say to him. Those chiefly introduced, are his Rabbies and Philosophers in the first book ; and his Women and their Attendants, in the second : with these the Sacred History mention him to have conversed, as likewise with the angel brought down, in the third book, to help him out of his difficulties, or at least to teach him how to overcome them :

Nec Deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus.

I presume this poetical liberty may be very justly allowed me on so solemn an occasion.

In my description, I have endeavoured to keep to the notions and manners of the Jewish nation at the time when Solomon lived ; and where I allude to the customs of the Greeks, I believe I may be justified by the strictest chronology, though a poet is not obliged to the rules that confine an historian. Virgil has anticipated two hundred years, or the Trojan hero and Carthaginian queen could not have been brought together : and without the same anachronism, several of the finest parts of his *Æneis* must have been omitted. Our countryman, Mil-

ton, goes yet further: he takes up many of his material images some thousands of years after the fall of man; nor could he otherwise have written, or we read, one of the sublimest pieces of invention that was ever yet produced. This likewise takes off the objection that some names of countries, terms of art, and notions in natural philosophy, are otherwise expressed than can be warranted by the geography or astronomy of Solomon's time. Poets are allowed the same liberty in their descriptions and comparisons, as painters in their draperies and ornaments: their personages may be dressed not exactly in the same habits which they wore, but in such as make them appear most graceful. In this case, probability must atone for the want of truth. This liberty has indeed been abused by eminent masters in either science: Raphael and Tasso have shewed their discretion, where Paul Veronese and Ariosto are to answer for their extravagances. It is the excess, not the thing itself, that is blameable.

I would say one word of the measure in which this and most poems of the age are written. Heroic, with continued rhyme, as Donne and his contemporaries used it, carrying the sense of one verse most commonly into another, was found too dissolute and wild, and came very often too near prose. As Davenant and Waller corrected, and Dryden perfected it, it is too confined: it cuts off the sense at the end of every first line, which must always rhyme to the next following, and, consequently, produces too frequent an identity in the sound, and brings every couplet to the point of an epigram. It is indeed too broken and weak to

convey the sentiments and represent the images proper for Epic ; and as it tires the writer while he composes, it must do the same to the reader while he repeats, especially in a poem of any considerable length.

If striking out into blank verse, as Milton did, (and in this kind Mr. Philips, had he lived, would have excelled) or running the thought into alternate and stanza, which allows a greater variety, and still preserves the dignity of the verse, as Spenser and Fairfax have done ; if either of these, I say, be a proper remedy for my poetical complaint, or if any other may be found, I dare not determine ; I am only inquiring in order to be better informed, without presuming to direct the judgment of others. And while I am speaking of the verse itself, I give all just praise to many of my friends, now living, who have in Epic carried the harmony of their numbers as far as the nature of this measure will permit : but, once more, he that writes in rhymes dances in fetters ; and as his chain is more extended, he may certainly take larger steps.

I need make no apology for the short digressive panegyric upon Great Britain in the first book : I am glad to have it observed that there appears throughout all my verses a zeal for the honour of my country ; and I had rather be thought a good Englishman, than the best poet or greatest scholar that ever wrote.

And now as to the publishing of this piece ; though I have in a literal sense observed Horace's *nonum prematur in annum*, yet have I by no means obeyed our poetical lawgiver, according to the

spirit of the precept. The Poem has indeed been written and laid aside much longer than the term prescribed; but in the meantime I had little leisure, and less inclination, to revise or print it. The frequent interruptions I have met with in my private studies, and great variety of public life in which I have been employed, my thoughts (such as they are) having generally been expressed in foreign language, and even formed by a habitude very different from what the beauty and elegance of English poetry requires; all these, and some other circumstances, which we had as good pass by at present, do justly contribute to make my excuse in this behalf very plausible. Far, indeed, from designing to print, I had locked up these papers in my 'scritoire, there to lie in peace till my executors might have taken them out. What altered this design, or how my 'scritoire came to be unlocked before my coffin was nailed, is the question. The true reason I take to be the best: many of my friends of the first quality, finest learning, and greatest understanding, have wrested the key from my hands by a very kind and irresistible violence; and the Poem is published not without my consent indeed, but a little against my opinion, and with an implicit submission to the partiality of their judgment. As I give up here the fruits of many of my vacant hours to their amusement and pleasure, I shall always think myself happy if I may dedicate my most serious endeavours to their interest and service: and I am proud to finish this Preface by saying, that the violence of many enemies, whom I never justly offended, is abundantly recompensed by the goodness of more

friends, whom I can never sufficiently oblige : and if I here assume the liberty of mentioning my Lord Harley and Lord Bathurst as the authors of this amicable confederacy, among all those whose names do me great honour in the beginning of my book ¹, these two only ought to be angry with me ; for I disobey their positive order, whilst I make even this small acknowledgment of their particular kindness.

¹ The folio edition of 1718, to which is prefixed a most numerous list of honourable and celebrated names as subscribers.

KNOWLEDGE.

BOOK I.

TEXTS CHIEFLY ALLUDED TO IN THIS BOOK.

THE words of the Preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem, Eccles. chap. i. ver. 1.

Vanity of vanities, (saith the Preacher) vanity of vanities ; all is vanity, ver. 2.

I communed with mine own heart, saying, ‘ Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem : yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge, ver. 16.

He spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall : he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes, 1 Kings, chap. iv. ver. 33.

I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever ; nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it : and God doeth it, that men should fear before him, Eccles. chap. iii. ver. 14.

He hath made every thing beautiful in his time : also he hath set the world in their heart ; so that no man can find out the work that God maketh

from the beginning to the end, Eccles. chap. iii. ver. 11.

For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow, chap. i. ver. 18.

And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end: and much study is a weariness of the flesh, chap. xii. ver. 12.

SOLOMON.

KNOWLEDGE.

BOOK I.

Ὁ Βίος γὰρ ὄνομα ἐχει πόνος δ' ἐργὸν πέλει. EURIP.

Siquis Deus mihi largiatur, ut ex hac ætate repuerascam,
et in cunis vagiam, valde recusem. CIC. de Senect.

The bewailing of man's miseries hath been elegantly and copiously set forth by many, in the writings as well of philosophers as divines; and it is both a pleasant and a profitable contemplation.

Lord BACON'S Advancement of Learning.

THE ARGUMENT.

Solomon, seeking happiness from knowledge, convenes the learned men of his kingdom; requires them to explain to him the various operations and effects of Nature; discourses of vegetables, animals, and man; proposes some questions concerning the origin and situation of the habitable earth; proceeds to examine the system of the visible heaven; doubts if there may not be a plurality of worlds; inquires into the nature of spirits and angels; and wishes to be more fully informed as to the attributes of the Supreme Being. He is imperfectly answered by the Rabbins and Doctors; blames his own curiosity; and concludes that, as to human science, ALL IS VANITY.

YE sons of men, with just regard attend,
Observe the Preacher, and believe the friend,
Whose serious Muse inspires him to explain
That all we act and all we think—is vain:

That in this pilgrimage of seventy years,
O'er rocks of perils and through vales of tears
Destin'd to march, our doubtful steps we tend,
Tir'd with the toil, yet fearful of its end :
That from the womb we take our fatal shares
Of follies, passions, labours, tumults, cares ;
And at approach of death shall only know [flow, }
The truths which from these pensive numbers }
That we pursue false joy and suffer real woe.

Happiness! object of that waking dream
Which we call Life, mistaking ; fugitive theme
Of my pursuing verse : ideal shade,
Notional good : by fancy only made,
And by tradition nurs'd ; fallacious fire,
Whose dancing beams mislead our fond desire :
Cause of our care, and error of our mind ;
Oh ! hadst thou ever been by Heaven design'd
To Adam, and his mortal race, the boon
Entire had been reserv'd for Solomon :
On me the partial lot had been bestow'd,
And in my cup the golden draught had flow'd.

But, O ! ere yet original man was made,
Ere the foundations of this earth were laid,
It was opponent to our search ordain'd,
That joy, still sought, should never be attain'd :
This sad experience cites me to reveal,
And what I dictate is from what I feel.

Born, as I was, great David's favourite son,
Dear to my people on the Hebrew throne,
Sublime my court with Ophir's treasures bless'd,
My name extended to the farthest East,
My body cloth'd with every outward grace,
Strength in my limbs, and beauty in my face,
My shining thought with fruitful notions crown'd,
Quick my invention, and my judgment sound ;

' Arise (I commun'd with myself) arise,
Think to be happy; to be great be wise;
Content of spirit must from science flow,
For 'tis a godlike attribute to know.'

I said, and sent my edict through the land;
Around my throne the letter'd rabbins stand:
Historic leaves revolve, long volumes spread,
The old discoursing as the younger read;
Attent I heard, propos'd my doubts, and said: }

' The vegetable world, each plant and tree,
Its seed, its name, its nature, its degree,
I am allow'd, as Fame reports, to know,
From the fair cedar on the craggy brow
Of Lebanon, nodding supremely tall,
To creeping moss, and hyssop on the wall;
Yet just and conscions to myself, I find
A thousand doubts oppose the searching mind.

' I know not why the beach delights the glade,
With boughs extended and a rounder shade,
Whilst towering firs in conic forms arise,
And with a pointed spear divide the skies;
Nor why, again, the changing oak should shed
The yearly honour of his stately head,
Whilst the distinguish'd yew is ever seen
Unchang'd his branch, and permanent his green;
Wanting the sun why does the caltha fade?
Why does the cypress flourish in the shade?
The fig and date, why love they to remain
In middle station, and an even plain,
While in the lower marsh the gourd is found,
And while the hill with olive-shade is crown'd?
Why does one climate and one soil endue
The blushing poppy with a crimson hue, }
Yet leave the lily pale, and tinge the violet blue? }

Why does the fond carnation love to shoot
A various colour from one parent root ;
While the fantastic tulip strives to break
In two-fold beauty and a parted streak !
The twining jasmine and the blushing rose,
With lavish grace their morning scents disclose ;
The smelling tuberose and jonquil declare
The stronger impulse of an evening air.
Whence has the tree (resolve me) or the flower
A various instinct or a different power : [breath,
Why should one earth, one clime, one stream, one
Raise this to strength, and sicken that to death ?

‘ Whence does it happen that the plant which well
We name the sensitive, should move and feel ?
Whence know her leaves to answer her command,
And with quick horror fly the neighbouring hand ?

‘ Along the sunny bank or watery mead,
Ten thousand stalks their various blossoms spread ;
Peaceful and lowly, in their native soil,
They neither know to spin nor care to toil,
Yet with confess’d magnificence deride
Our vile attire, and impotence of pride.
The cowslip smiles in brighter yellow dress’d,
Than that which veils the nubile virgin’s breast ;
A fairer red stands blushing in the rose,
Than that which on the bridegroom’s vestment flows.
Take but the humblest lily of the field,
And if our pride will to our reason yield,
It must by sure comparison be shown,
That on the regal seat great David’s son,
Array’d in all his robes and types of power,
Shines with less glory than that simple flower.

‘ Of fishes next, my friends, I would inquire :
How the mute race engender or respire,

From the small fry that glide on Jordan's stream
Unmark'd, a multitude without a name,
To that leviathan, who o'er the seas
Immense rolls onward his impetuous ways,
And mocks the wind, and in the tempest plays? }
How they in warlike bands march greatly forth,
From freezing waters and the colder North,
To southern climes directing their career,
Their station changing with the' inverted year?
How all with careful knowledge are endued,
To choose their proper bed, and wave, and food ; }
To guard their spawn, and educate their brood? }

‘ Of birds, how each, according to her kind,
Proper materials for her nest can find,
And build a frame which deepest thought in man
Would or amend or imitate in vain?
How in small flights they know to try their young,
And teach the callow child her parent's song?
Why these frequent the plain, and those the wood?
Why every land has her specific brood?
Where the tall crane or winding swallow goes,
Fearful of gathering winds and falling snows ;
If into rocks or hollow trees they creep,
In temporary death confin'd to sleep,
Or, conscious of the coming evil, fly
To milder regions and a southern sky?

‘ Of beasts and creeping insects shall we trace
The wondrous nature and the various race ;
Or wild or tame, or friend to man or foe,
Of us what they, or what of them we know?

‘ Tell me, ye studious ; who pretend to see
Far into Nature's bosom, whence the bee
Was first inform'd her ventrous flight to steer
Through tractless paths and an abyss of air?

Whence she avoids the slimy marsh, and knows
The fertile hills, where sweeter herbage grows,
And honey-making flowers their opening buds
disclose?

How, from the thicken'd mist and setting sun
Finds she the labour of her day is done?
Who taught her against winds and rains to strive,
To bring her burden to the certain hive.
And through the liquid fields again to pass
Duteous, and harkening to the sounding brass?

‘ And, O thou sluggard ! tell me why the ant,
Midst summer’s plenty thinks of winter’s want,
By constant journies careful to prepare
Her stores, and bringing home the corny ear,
By what instruction does she bite the grain,
Lest hid in earth, and taking root again,
It might elude the foresight of her care ?
Distinct in either insect’s deed appear
The marks of thought, contrivance, hope, and fear. }

‘ Fix thy corporeal and internal eye
On the young gnat or new-engender’d fly,
Or the vile worm, that yesterday began
To crawl, thy fellow-creatures, abject man ! [see,
Like thee they breathe, they move, they taste, they
They show their passions, by their acts, like thee ;
Darting their stings, they previously declare
Design’d revenge, and fierce intent of war :
Laying their eggs, they evidently prove
The genial power and full effect of love.
Each, then, has organs to digest his food,
One to beget, and one receive the brood :
Has limbs and sinews, blood, and heart and brain, }
Life and her proper functions to sustain, }
Through the whole fabric smaller than a grain. }

What more can our penurious reason grant
To the large whale or castled elephant?
To those enormous terrors of the Nile,
The crested snake and long-tail'd crocodile,
Than that all differ but in shape and name,
Each destin'd to a less or larger frame?

‘ For potent Nature loves a various act,
Prone to enlarge, or studious to contract;
Now forms her work too small, now too immense,
And scorns the measures of our feeble sense.
The object, spread too far, or rais'd too high,
Denies its real image to the eye;
Too little, it eludes the dazzled sight,
Becomes mix'd blackness or unparted light.
Water and air the varied form confound;
The straight looks crooked, and the square grows
round.

‘ Thus while with fruitless hope and weary pain
We seek great Nature's power, but seek in vain,
Safe sits the goddess in her dark retreat,
Around her myriads of ideas wait,
And endless shapes, which the mysterious queen
Can take or quit, can alter or retain,
As from our lost pursuit she wills to hide
Her close decrees, and chasten human pride.

‘ Untam'd and fierce the tiger still remains;
He tires his life in biting on his chains :
For the kind gifts of water and of food
Ungrateful, and returning ill for good, }
He seeks his keeper's flesh, and thirsts his blood : }
While the strong camel and the generous horse,
Restrain'd and aw'd by man's inferior force,
Do to the rider's will their rage submit,
And answer to the spur, and own the bit;

Stretch their glad mouths to meet the feeder's hand,
Pleas'd with his weight, and proud of his command.

‘ Again: the lonely fox roams far abroad,
On secret rapine bent and midnight fraud ;
Now haunts the cliff, now traverses the lawn,
And flies the hated neighbourhood of man ;
While the kind spaniel and the faithful hound,
Likest that fox in shape and species found,
Refuses through these cliffs and lawns to roam,
Pursues the noted path, and covets home ;
Does with kind joy domestic faces meet,
Takes what the glutton child denies to eat,
And, dying, licks his long-lov'd master's feet. }

‘ By what immediate cause they are inclin'd,
In many acts, 'tis hard, I own, to find.
I see in others, or I think I see,
That strict their principles and ours agree.
Evil, like us, they shun, and covet good,
Abhor the poison, and receive the food :
Like us they love or hate ; like us they know
To joy the friend, or grapple with the foe.
With seeming thought their action they intend,
And use the means proportion'd to the end.
Then vainly the philosopher avers
That reason guides our deed, and instinct theirs.
How can we justly different causes frame,
When the effects entirely are the same ?
Instinct and reason how can we divide ?
'Tis the fool's ignorance and the pedant's pride.

‘ With the same folly, sure, man vaunts his sway,
If the brute beast refuses to obey.
For, tell me, when the empty boaster's word
Proclaims himself the universal lord,

Does he not tremble lest the lion's paw
Should join his plea against the fancied law?
Would not the learned coward leave the chair,
If in the schools or porches should appear
The fierce hyæna or the foaming bear?

‘ The combatant too late the field declines,
When now the sword is girded to his loins.
When the swift vessel flies before the wind,
Too late the sailor views the land behind :
And 'tis too late now back again to bring
Inquiry, rais'd and towering on the wing ;
Forward she strives, averse to be withheld
From nobler objects and a larger field.

‘ Consider with me this ethereal space,
Yielding to earth and sea the middle place :
Anxious I ask ye, how the pensile ball
Should never strive to rise, nor fear to fall?
When I reflect how the revolving sun
Does round our globe his crooked journies run,
I doubt of many lands if they contain
Or herd of beast or colony of man ;
If any nation pass their destin'd days
Beneath the neighbouring sun's directer rays ;
If any suffer, on the polar coast,
The rage of Arctos and eternal frost.

‘ May not the pleasure of Omnipotence
To each of these some secret good dispense?
Those who amidst the torrid regions live,
May they not gales unknown to us receive?
See daily showers rejoice the thirsty earth,
And bless the flowery buds' succeeding birth?
May they not pity us, condemn'd to bear
The various heaven of an obliquer sphere,

While by fix'd laws, and with a just return,
They feel twelve hours that shade, for twelve that
burn,
And praise the neighbouring sun, whose constant
Enlightens them with seasons still the same? [flame
And may not those whose distant lot is cast
North beyond Tartary's extended waste,
Where through the plains of one continual day
Six shining months pursue their even way,
And six succeeding urge their dusky flight,
Obscur'd with vapours, and o'erwhelm'd in night ;
May not, I ask, the natives of these climes
(As annals may inform succeeding times)
To our quotidian change of Heaven prefer
Their own vicissitude and equal share
Of day and night disparted through the year? }
May they not scorn our sun's repeated race,
To narrow bounds prescrib'd and little space,
Hastening from morn, and headlong driv'n from
Half of our daily toil yet scarcely done? [noon,
May they not justly to our climes upbraid
Shortness of night and penury of shade,
That ere our wearied limbs are justly bless'd
With wholesome sleep and necessary rest,
Another sun demands return of care,
The remnant toil of yesterday to bear?
Whilst, when the solar beams salute their sight,
Bold and secure in half a year of light,
Uninterrupted voyages they take
To the remotest wood and furthest lake,
Manage the fishing, and pursue the course [force ;
With more extended nerves and more continued
And when declining day forsakes their sky,
When gathering clouds speak gloomy winter nigh,

With plenty for the coming season bless'd,
Six solid months (an age) they live, releas'd
From all the labour, process, clamour, woe,
Which our sad scenes of daily action know ;
They light the shining lamp, prepare the feast,
And with full mirth receive the welcome guest,
Or tell their tender loves (the only care
Which now they suffer) to the listening fair,
And, rais'd in pleasure, or repos'd in ease,
(Grateful alternates of substantial peace)
They bless the long nocturnal influence shed
On the crown'd goblet and the genial bed.

‘ In foreign isles which our discoverers find,
Far from this length of continent disjoin'd,
The rugged bear's or spotted lynx's brood
Frighten the vallies, and infest the wood ;
The hungry crocodile and hissing snake
Lurk in the troubled stream and fenny brake ;
And man, untaught and ravenous as the beast,
Does valley, wood, and brake, and stream, infest ;
Deriv'd these men and animals their birth
From trunk of oak, or pregnant womb of earth ?
Whence then the old belief, that all began
In Eden's shade and one created man ?
Or, grant this progeny was wafted o'er
By coasting boats from next adjacent shore, [spring,
Would those, from whom we will suppose they
Slaughter to harmless lands and poison bring ?
Would they on board or bears or lynxes take,
Feed the she-adder and the brooding snake ?
Or could they think the new-discover'd isle
Pleas'd to receive a pregnant crocodile ?

‘ And since the savage lineage we must trace
From Noah sav'd, and his distinguish'd race,

How should their fathers happen to forget
The arts which Noah taught, the rules he set,
To sow the glebe, to plant the generous vine,
And load with grateful flames the holy shrine?
While the great sire's unhappy sons are found,
Unpress'd their vintage, and untill'd their ground,
Straggling o'er dale and hill in quest of food,
And rude of arts, of virtue, and of God.

‘How shall we next o'er earth and seas pursue
The varied forms of every thing we view;
That all is chang'd, though all is still the same,
Fluid the parts, yet durable the frame?
Of those materials which have been confess'd
The pristine springs and parents of the rest,
Each becomes other. Water stopp'd, gives birth
To grass and plants, and thickens into earth;
Diffus'd, it rises in a higher sphere,
Dilates its drops, and softens into air:
Those finer parts of air again aspire,
Move into warmth, and brighten into fire;
That fire once more, by thicker air o'ercome,
And downward forc'd, in earth's capacious womb
Alters its particles, is fire no more,
But lies resplendent dust and shining ore:
Or, running through the mighty Mother's veins,
Changes its shape, puts off its old remains;
With watery parts its lessen'd force divides,
Flows into waves, and rises into tides.

‘Disparted streams shall from their channels fly,
And, deep surcharg'd, by sandy mountains lie
Obscurely sepulcher'd. By eating rain
And furious wind, down to the distant plain
The hill, that hides his head above the skies,
Shall fall: the plain, by slow degrees, shall rise

Higher than erst had stood the summit hill ;
For Time must Nature's great behest fulfil.

‘ Thus by a length of years and change of fate,
All things are light or heavy, small or great ;
Thus Jordan's waves shall future clouds appear,
And Egypt's pyramids refine to air ;
Thus later age shall ask for Pison's flood,
And travellers inquire where Babel stood.

‘ Now where we see these changes often fall,
Sedate we pass them by as natural ;
Where to our eye more rarely they appear,
The pompous name of prodigy they bear :
Let active thought these close meanders trace,
Let human wit their dubious boundaries place.
Are all things miracle, or nothing such ?
And prove we not too little, or too much ?

‘ For that a branch cut off, a wither'd rod,
Should, at a word pronounc'd, revive and bud ;
Is this more strange than that the mountain's brow,
Stripp'd by December's frost and white with snow,
Should push in spring ten thousand thousand buds,
And boast returning leaves and blooming woods ?
That each successive night from opening Heaven
The food of angels should to man be given,
Is this more strange than that with common bread
Our fainting bodies every day are fed ?
Than that each grain and seed, consum'd in earth,
Raises its store and multiplies its birth ?
And from the handful which the tiller sows,
The labour'd fields rejoice, and future harvest flows ?

‘ Then, from whate'er we can to sense produce
Common and plain, or wondrous and abstruse,
From Nature's constant or eccentric laws
The thoughtful soul this general influence draws, }
That an effect must presuppose a cause :

And while she does her upward flight sustain,
Touching each link of the continued chain,
At length she is oblig'd and forc'd to see
A first, a source, a life, a deity ;
What has for ever been, and must for ever be.

}

' This great existence thus by reason found,
Bless'd by all power, with all perfection crown'd,
How can we bind or limit his decree
By what our ear has heard, or eye may see?
Say, then, is all in heaps of water lost,
Beyond the islands and the midland coast?
Or has that God who gave our world its birth,
Sever'd those waters by some other earth,
Countries by future ploughshares to be torn,
And cities rais'd by nations yet unborn!
Ere the progressive course of restless age
Performs three thousand times its annual stage,
May not our power and learning be suppress'd,
And arts and empire learn to travel west?

' Where, by the strength of this idea charm'd,
Lighten'd with glory, and with rapture warm'd,
Ascends my soul? what sees she white and great
Amidst subjected seas? an isle, the seat
Of power and plenty, her imperial throne
For justice and for mercy sought and known ;
Virtues sublime, great attributes of Heaven,
From thence to this distinguish'd nation given :
Yet farther west the western isle extends
Her happy fame ; her armed fleets she sends
To climates folded yet from human eye,
And lands which we imagine wave and sky ;
From pole to pole she hears her acts resound,
And rules an empire by no ocean bound ;
Knows her ships anchor'd, and her sails unfurl'd,
In other Indies and a second world.

‘ Long shall Britannia (that must be her name)
Be first in conquest, and preside in fame ;
Long shall her favour’d monarchy engage
The teeth of Envy and the force of Age ;
Rever’d and happy, she shall long remain
Of human things least changeable, least vain ;
Yet all must with the general doom comply,
And this great glorious power, though last, must die.

‘ Now let us leave this earth, and lift our eye
To the large convex of yon azure sky :
Behold it like an ample curtain spread,
Now streak’d and glowing with the morning red ;
Anon at noon in flaming yellow bright,
And choosing sable for the peaceful night.
Ask reason, now, whence light and shade were given,
And whence this great variety of Heaven ?
Reason our guide, what can she more reply,
Than that the sun illuminates the sky ?
Than that night rises from his absent ray,
And his returning lustre kindles day ?

But we expect the morning red in vain,
’Tis hid in vapours, or obscur’d by rain :
The noontide yellow we in vain require,
’Tis black in storm, or red in lightning fire.
Pitchy and dark the night sometimes appears,
Friend to our woe, and parent of our fears ;
Our joy and wonder sometimes she excites,
With stars unnumber’d and eternal lights.
Send forth, ye wise, send forth your labouring
thought,

Let it return, with empty notions fraught
Of airy columns every moment broke,
Of circling whirlpools, and of spheres of smoke ;
Yet this solution but once more affords
New change of terms, and scaffolding of words ;

In other garb my question I receive,
And take the doubt the very same I gave.

‘Lo! as a giant strong the lusty Sun
Multiplied rounds in one great round does run ;
Twofold his course, yet constant his career,
Changing the day, and finishing the year :
Again, when his descending orb retires,
And earth perceives the absence of his fires,
The moon affords us her alternate ray,
And with kind beams distributes fainter day,
Yet keeps the stages of her monthly race,
Various her beams, and changeable her face ;
Each planet shining in his proper sphere,
Does with just speed his radiant voyage steer ;
Each sees his lamp with different lustre crown’d ;
Each knows his course with different periods bound,
And in his passage through the liquid space,
Nor hastens nor retards his neighbour’s race.
How shine these planets with substantial rays?
Does innate lustre gild their measur’d days?
Or do they (as your schemes, I think, have shown) }
Dart furtive beams and glory not their own, }
All servants to that source of light, the sun?

‘Again ; I see ten thousand thousand stars,
Nor cast in lines, in circles, nor in squares,
(Poor rules, with which our bounded mind is fill’d
When we would plant, or cultivate, or build)
But shining with such vast, such various light,
As speaks the hand that form’d them infinite.
How mean the order and perfection sought
In the best product of the human thought,
Compar’d to the great harmony that reigns
In what the Spirit of the world ordains !

‘ Now if the sun to earth transmits his ray,
Yet does not scorch us with too fierce a day,
How small a portion of his power is given
To orbs more distant, and remoter heaven?
And of those stars which our imperfect eye
Has doom’d and fix’d to one eternal sky,
Each by a native stock of honour great,
May dart strong influence, and diffuse kind heat,
Itself a sun, and with transmissive light
Enliven worlds denied to human sight ;
Around the circles of their ambient skies
New moons may grow or wane, may set or rise,
And other stars may to those suns be earths,
Give their own elements their proper births,
Divide their climes, or elevate their pole,
See their lands flourish, and their oceans roll ;
Yet these great orbs, thus radically bright,
Primitive founts and origins of light,
May each to other (as their different sphere
Makes or their distance or their height appear) }
Be seen a nobler or inferior star, }
And in that space which we call air and sky, }
Myriads of earths, and moons, and suns, may lie }
Unmeasur’d and unknown by human eye.

‘ In vain we measure this amazing sphere,
And find and fix its centre here or there,
Whilst its circumference, scorning to be brought
Even into fancied space, illudes our vanquisht
thought.

‘ Where, then, are all the radiant monsters driven
With which your guesses fill’d the frighten’d Heaven?
Where will their fictitious images remain?
In paper schemes, and the Chaldean’s brain?

This problem yet, this offspring of a guess,
Let us for once a child of Truth confess ;
That these fair stars, these objects of delight
And terror to our searching dazzled sight,
Are worlds immense, nnnumber'd, infinite ;
But do these worlds display their beams, or guide
Their orbs, to serve thy use, to please thy pride?
Thyself but dust, thy stature but a span,
A moment thy duration, foolish man!
As well may the minutest emmet say
That Caucasus was rais'd to pave his way ;
The snail, that Lebanon's extended wood
Was destin'd only for his walk and food ;
The vilest cockle, gaping on the coast
That rounds the ample seas, as well may boast
The craggy rock projects above the sky,
That he in safety at its foot may lie ;
And the whole ocean's confluent waters swell,
Only to quench his thirst, or move and blanch his
shell.

‘ A higher flight the ventrous goddess tries,
Leaving material worlds and local skies ;
Inquires what are the beings, where the space,
That form'd and held the angel's ancient race ?
For rebel Lucifer with Michael sought
(I offer only what tradition taught)
Embattled cherub against cherub rose,
Did shield to shield, and power to power oppose ;
Heaven rung with triumph, hell was fill'd with
woes.

What were these forms, of which your volumes tell
How some fought great, and others recreant fell ?
These bound to bear an everlasting load,
Durance of chain, and banishment of God ;

By fatal turns their wretched strength to tire,
To swim in sulphurous lakes, or land on solid fire ;
While those, exalted to primeval light,
Excess of blessing, and supreme delight,
Only perceive some little pause of joys,
In those great moments when their God employs
Their ministry to pour his threaten'd hate
On the proud king, or the rebellious state ;
Or to reverse Jehovah's high command,
And speak the thunder falling from his hand,
When to his duty the proud king returns,
And the rebellious state in ashes mourns ?
How can good angels be in Heaven confin'd,
Or view that Presence which no space can bind ?
Is God above, beneath, or yon, or here ?
He who made all, is he not every where ?
Oh ! how can wicked angels find a night
So dark to hide them from that piercing light
Which form'd the eye, and gave the power of }
sight ?

‘ What mean I now of angel, when I bear
Firm body, spirit pure, or fluid air ?
Spirits, to action spiritual confin'd,
Friends to our thought, and kindred to our mind,
Should only act and prompt us from within,
Nor by external eye be ever seen.
Was it not therefore to our fathers known
That these had appetite, and limb, and bone ?
Else how could Abram wash their wearied feet,
Or Sarah please their taste with savoury meat ?
Whence should they fear ? or why did Lot engage
To save their bodies from abusive rage ?
And how could Jacob, in a real fight,
Feel or resist the wrestling angel's might ?

How could a form its strength with matter try?
Or how a spirit touch a mortal's thigh?

‘ Now are they air condens’d, or gather’d rays?
How guide they then our prayer, or keep our ways,
By stronger blasts still subject to be tost,
By tempests scatter’d, and in whirlwinds lost?

Have they, again, (as sacred song proclaims)
Substances real, and existing frames?
How comes it, since with them we jointly share
The great effect of one Creator’s care,
That whilst our bodies sicken and decay,
Theirs are for ever healthy, young, and gay?
Why, whilst we struggle, in this vale beneath,
With want and sorrow, with disease and death,
Do they more bless’d perpetual life employ,
On songs of pleasure, and in scenes of joy?

‘ Now, when my mind has all this world survey’d,
And found that nothing by itself was made;
When thought has rais’d itself by just degrees, [trees,
From vallies crown’d with flowers, and hills with
From smoking minerals, and from rising streams,
From fattening Nilus, or victorious Thames;
From all the living that four-footed move
Along the shore, the meadow, or the grove;
From all that can with fins or feathers fly
Through the ærial or the watery sky;
From the poor reptile with a reasoning soul,
That miserable master of the whole;
From this great object of the body’s eye,
This fair half-round, this ample azure sky,
Terribly large, and wonderfully bright,
With stars unnumber’d, and unmeasur’d light;
From essences unseen, celestial names,
Enlightening spirits, ministerial flames,

Angels, dominions, potentates, and thrones,
All that in each degree the name of creature owns;
Lift we our reason to that sovereign Cause
Who bless'd the whole with life, and bounded it with
laws;

Who forth from nothing call'd this comely frame,
His will and act, his word and work the same;
To whom a thousand years are but a day;
Who bade the Light her genial beams display, }
And set the Moon, and taught the Sun his way;
Who waking Time, his creature, from the source
Primeval, order'd his predestin'd course,
Himself, as in the hollow of his hand,
Holding, obedient to his high command,
The deep abyss, the long-continued store, [pour }
Where months, and days, and hours, and minutes,
Their floating parts, and thenceforth are no more: }
This Alpha and Omega, First and Last,
Who, like the potter, in a mould has cast
The world's great frame, commanding it to be
Such as the eyes of sense and reason see,
Yet if he wills may change or spoil the whole, }
May take yon beauteous, mystic, starry roll,
And burn it like an useless parchment scroll;
May from its basis in one moment pour
This melted earth—

Like liquid metal, and like burning ore;
Who, sole in power, at the beginning said,
'Let sea, and air, and earth, and Heaven, be made!'
And it was so—And when he shall ordain
In other sort, has but to speak again,
And they shall be no more: of this great theme,
This glorious, hallow'd, everlasting Name,
This God, I would discourse'—

The learned elders sat appall'd, amaz'd,
And each with mutual look on other gaz'd ;
Nor speech they meditate, nor answer frame ;
Too plain, alas ! their silence spake their shame ;
Till one, in whom an outward mien appear'd
And turn superior to the vulgar herd,
Began : ' That human learning's furthest reach
Was but to note the doctrines I could teach ;
That mine to speak, and theirs was to obey,
For I in knowledge more than power did sway,
And the astonish'd world in me beheld
Moses eclips'd, and Jesse's son excell'd.'
Humble a second bow'd, and took the word,
Foresaw my name by future age ador'd ;
' O live (said he) thou wisest of the wise ;
As none has equall'd, none shall ever rise
Excelling thee'—

Parent of wicked, bane of honest deeds,
Pernicious Flattery ! thy malignant seeds
In an ill hour, and by a fatal hand,
Sadly diffus'd o'er Virtue's gleby land,
With rising pride amidst the corn appear,
And choke the hopes and harvest of the year.

And now the whole perplex'd ignoble crowd,
Mute to my questions, in my praises loud,
Echo'd the word : whence things arose, or how
They thus exist, the aptest nothing know :
What yet is not, but is ordain'd to be,
All veil of doubt apart, the dullest see.

My prophets and my sophists finish'd here
Their civil efforts of the verbal war :
Not so my rabbins and logicians yield ;
Retiring, still they combat : from the field
Of open arms unwilling they depart,
And skulk behind the subterfuge of art.

To speak one thing mix'd dialects they join,
Divide the simple, and the plain define ;
Fix fancied laws, and form imagin'd rules,
'Terms of their art, and jargon of their schools,
Ill-grounded maxims, by false gloss enlarg'd,
And captious science against reason charg'd.'

Soon their crude notions with each other fought ;
The adverse sect denied what this had taught ;
And he at length the amplest triumph gain'd,
Who contradicted what the last maintain'd.

O wretched impotence of human mind !
We, erring, still excuse for error find,
And darkling grope, not knowing we are blind. }

Vain man ! since first the blushing sire essay'd
His folly with connected leaves to shade,
How does the crime of thy resembling race,
With like attempt, that pristine error trace ?
Too plain thy nakedness of soul espied,
Why dost thou strive the conscious shame to hide, }
By masks of eloquence and veils of pride ? }

With outward smiles their flattery I receiv'd,
Own'd my sick mind by their discourse reliev'd ;
But bent, and inward to myself, again
Perplex'd, these matters I revolv'd in vain.,
My search still tir'd, my labour still renew'd,
At length I ignorance and knowledge view'd
Impartial ; both in equal balance laid, [weigh'd.
Light flew the knowing scale, the doubtful heavy

Forc'd by reflective reason, I confess
That human science is uncertain guess.
Alas ! we grasp at clouds, and beat the air,
Vexing that spirit we intend to clear.
Can thought beyond the bounds of matter climb ?
Or who shall tell me what is space or time ?

In vain we lift up our presumptuous eyes
To what our Maker to their ken denies :
The searcher follows fast, the object faster flies. }
The little which imperfectly we find, }
Seduces only the bewilder'd mind }
To fruitless search of something yet behind. }
Various discussions tear our heated brain : }
Opinions often turn ; still doubts remain ; }
And who indulges thought increases pain. }

How narrow limits were to wisdom given !
Earth she surveys ; she thence would measure
Heaven :

Through mists obscure, now wings her tedious way,
Now wanders, dazzled with too bright a day,
And from the summit of a pathless coast
Sees infinite, and in that sight is lost.

Remember that the curs'd desire to know,
Offspring of Adam, was thy source of woe ;
Why wilt thou, then, renew the vain pursuit,
And rashly catch at the forbidden fruit ?
With empty labour and eluded strife
Seeking, by knowledge, to attain to life ;
For ever from that fatal tree debar'd,
Which flaming swords and angry cherubs guard.

PLEASURE.

BOOK II.

TEXTS CHIEFLY ALLUDED TO IN THIS BOOK.

I SAID in mine heart, ‘Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure.’ Eccles. chap. ii. ver. 1.

I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards, ver. 4.

I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits, ver. 5.

I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees, ver. 6.

‘Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun, ver. 11.

I gat me men-singers, and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts, ver. 8.

I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, (yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom) and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was

TEXTS CHIEFLY ALLUDED TO IN THIS BOOK. 41

that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven, all the days of their life, ver. 3.

Then said I in my heart, ‘As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me : and why was I then more wise?’ Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity. Eccles. chap. ii. ver. 15.

Therefore I hated life, because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me, chap. ii. ver. 17.

Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour ; so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour, chap. x. ver. 1.

The memory of the just is blessed ; but the name of the wicked shall rot. Prov. chap. x. ver. 7.

PLEASURE.

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT.

Solomon again seeking happiness, inquires if wealth and greatness can produce it; begins with the magnificence of gardens and buildings; the luxury of music and feasting; and proceeds to the hopes and desires of love. In two episodes are shown the follies and troubles of that passion. Solomon, still disappointed, falls under the temptations of libertinism and idolatry; recovers his thought; reasons aright; and concludes that, as to the pursuit of pleasure and sensual delight, **ALL IS VANITY AND VEXATION OF SPIRIT.**

TRY then, O man, the moments to deceive
That from the womb attend thee to the grave :
For wearied Nature find some apter scheme ;
Health be thy hope, and pleasure be thy theme :
From the perplexing and unequal ways
Where study brings thee ; from the endless maze
Which doubt persuades to run, forewarn'd, recede
To the gay field and flowery path, that lead
To jocund mirth, soft joy, and careless ease :
Forsake what may instruct, for what may please :
Essay amusing art and proud expense,
And make thy reason subject to thy sense.

I commun'd thus : the power of wealth I tried,
And all the various luxe of costly pride ;
Artists and plans reliev'd my solemn hours ;
I founded palaces and planted bow'rs.
Birds, fishes, beasts, of each exotic kind
I to the limits of my court confin'd.
To trees transfer'd I gave a second birth,
And bid a foreign shade grace Judah's earth.
Fish-ponds were made where former forests grew,
And hills were levell'd to extend the view.
Rivers, diverted from their native course,
And bound with chains of artificial force,
From large cascades in pleasing tumult roll'd,
Or rose through figur'd stone or breathing gold.
From furthest Africa's tormented womb
The marble brought, erects the spacious dome,
Or forms the pillars' long-extended rows, [grows.
On which the planted grove and pensile garden

The workmen here obey the master's call
To gild the turret, and to paint the wall ;
To mark the pavement there with various stone,
And on the jasper steps to rear the throne :
The spreading cedar, that an age had stood,
Supreme of trees, and mistress of the wood,
Cut down and carv'd, my shining roof adorns,
And Lebanon his ruin'd honour mourns.

A thousand artists show their cunning pow'r
To raise the wonders of the ivory tow'r :
A thousand maidens ply the purple loom
To weave the bed, and deck the regal room ;
Till Tyre confesses her exhausted store,
That on her coast the murex ¹ is no more ;

¹ The murex is a shell-fish, of the liquor whereof a purple colour is made.

When mix'd) the fife the viol's notes refin'd,
And every strength with every grace was join'd :
Each morn they wak'd me with a sprightly lay ;
Of opening Heaven they sung, and gladsome day :
Each evening their repeated skill express'd
Scenes of repose and images of rest :
Yet still in vain ; for music gather'd thought ;
But how unequal the effects it brought !
'The soft ideas of the cheerful note,
Lightly receiv'd, were easily forgot ;
The solemn violence of the graver sound
Knew to strike deep, and leave a lasting wound.

And now reflecting, I with grief descry
The sickly lust of the fantastic eye ;
How the weak organ is with seeing cloy'd,
Flying ere night what it at noon enjoy'd.
And now (unhappy search of thought !) I found
The fickle ear soon glutted with the sound,
Condemn'd eternal changes to pursue,
Tir'd with the last, and eager of the new.

I bade the virgins and the youth advance,
To temper music with the sprightly dance.
In vain ! too low the mimic motions seem ;
What takes our heart must merit our esteem.
Nature, I thought, perform'd too mean a part,
Forming her movements to the rules of art ;
And, vex'd, I found that the musician's hand
Had o'er the dancer's mind too great command.

I drank ; I lik'd it not : 'twas rage ; 'twas noise ;
An airy scene of transitory joys.
In vain I trusted that the flowing bowl
Would banish sorrow and enlarge the soul.
To the late revel and protracted feast
Wild dreams succeeded, and disorder'd rest ;

And as at dawn of morn fair reason's light
Broke through the fumes and phantoms of the night,
What had been said, I ask'd my soul, what done?
How flow'd our mirth, and whence the source begun?
Perhaps the jest that charm'd the sprightly crowd,
And made the jovial table laugh so loud,
To some false notion ow'd its poor pretence,
To an ambiguous word's perverted sense,
To a wild sonnet, or a wanton air,
Offence and torture to the sober ear.
Perhaps, alas! the pleasing stream was brought
From this man's error, from another's fault;
From topics which good-nature would forget,
And prudence mention with the last regret.

Add yet unnumber'd ills that lie unseen
In the pernicious draught; the word obscene,
Or harsh, which once elanc'd must ever fly
Irrevocable; the too prompt reply,
Seed of severe distrust and fierce debate,
What we should shun, and what we ought to hate.

Add, too, the blood impoverish'd, and the course
Of health suppress'd by wine's continued force.

Unhappy man! whom sorrow thus and rage
To different ills alternately engage;
Who drinks, alas! but to forget; nor sees
That melancholy sloth, severe disease,
Memory confus'd, and interrupted thought,
Death's harbingers, lie latent in the draught;
And in the flowers that wreath the sparkling bowl,
Fell adders hiss, and poisonous serpents roll.

Remains there ought untried that may remove
Sickness of mind, and heal the bosom?—Love!
Love yet remains; indulge his genial fire,
Cherish fair hope, solicit young desire,

And boldly bid thy anxious soul explore
This last great remedy's mysterious pow'r.

Why, therefore, hesitates my doubtful breast?
Why ceases it one moment to be bless'd?
' Fly swift, my friends; my servants, fly; employ
Your instant pains to bring your master joy.
Let all my wives and concubines be dress'd;
Let them to-night attend the royal feast;
All Israel's beauty, all the foreign fair,
The gifts of princes or the spoils of war:
Before their monarch they shall singly pass,
And the most worthy shall obtain the grace.'

I said: the feast was serv'd; the bowl was crown'd;
To the King's pleasure went the mirthful round.
The women came: as custom wills, they pass'd:
On one (O that distinguish'd one!) I cast
The favourite glance! O! yet my mind retains
That fond beginning of my infant pains.
Mature the virgin was, of Egypt's race,
Grace shap'd her limbs, and beauty deck'd her face:
Easy her motion seem'd, serene her air;
Full, though unzon'd, her bosom rose: her hair
Untied, and ignorant of artful aid,
Adown her shoulders loosely lay display'd,
And in the jetty curls ten thousand Cupids play'd. }

Fix'd on her charms, and pleas'd that I could love,
' Aid me, my friends, contribute to improve
Your monarch's bliss, (I said:) fresh roses bring
To strow my bed, till the impoverish'd Spring
Confess her want: around my amorous head
Be dropping myrrh and liquid amber shed
Till Arab has no more: from the soft lyre,
Sweet flute, and ten-string'd instrument, require

Sounds of delight : and thou, fair Nymph, draw nigh,
Thou in whose graceful form and potent eye
Thy master's joy, long sought, at length is found,
And, as thy brow, let my desires be crown'd.
O favourite Virgin, that hast warm'd the breast
Whose sovereign dictates subjugate the East !

I said ; and sudden from the golden throne,
With a submissive step, I hasted down.
The glowing garland from my hair I took,
Love in my heart, obedience in my look,
Prepar'd to place it on her comely head,
' O favourite Virgin ! (yet again I said)
Receive the honours destin'd to thy brow ;
And O, above thy fellows, happy thou !
Their duty must thy sovereign word obey.
Rise up, my love, my fair one, come away.'

What pang, alas ! what ecstasy of smart
Tore up my senses and transfix'd my heart,
When she, with modest scorn, the wreath return'd,
Reclin'd her beauteous neck, and inward mourn'd !

Forc'd by my pride, I my concern suppress'd, }
Pretended drowsiness, and wish of rest ; }
And, sullen, I forsook the' imperfect feast ; }
Ordering the eunuchs, to whose proper care
Our Eastern grandeur gives the' imprison'd fair,
To lead her forth to a distinguish'd bow'r,
And bid her dress the bed, and wait the hour.

Restless I follow'd this obdurate maid,
(Swift are the steps that Love and Anger tread)
Approach'd her person, courted her embrace,
Renew'd my flame, repeated my disgrace :
By turns put on the suppliant and the lord ;
Threaten'd this moment, and the next implor'd,

Offer'd again the unaccepted wreath,
And choice of happy love, or instant death.

Averse to all her amorous king desir'd,
Far as she might she decently retir'd,
And darting scorn and sorrow from her eyes,
'What means, (said she) King Solomon the wise?
This wretched body trembles at your pow'r;
Thus far could Fortune, but she can no more.
Free to herself my potent mind remains,
Nor fears the victor's rage, nor feels his chains.

'Tis said that thou canst plausibly dispute,
Supreme of seers, of angel, man, and brute;
Canst plead, with subtle wit and fair discourse,
Of passion's folly and of reason's force;
That to the tribes attentive, thou canst know
Whence their misfortunes or their blessings flow:
That thou in science as in power art great,
And truth and honour on thy edicts wait.
Where is that knowledge now, that regal thought,
With just advice and timely counsel fraught?
Where now, O Judge of Israel, does it rove?—
What in one moment dost thou offer? Love—
Love? why, 'tis joy or sorrow, peace or strife;
'Tis all the colour of remaining life,
And human misery must begin or end
As he becomes a tyrant or a friend.
Would David's son, religious, just, and grave,
To the first bride-bed of the world receive
A foreigner, a heathen, and a slave? }
Or, grant thy passion has these names destroy'd,
That Love, like Death, makes all distinction void,
Yet in his empire o'er thy abject breast,
His flames and torments only are express'd,

His rage can in my smiles alone relent,
And all his joys solicit my consent.

‘ Soft love, spontaneous tree, its parted root
Must from two hearts with equal vigour shoot,
Whilst each delighted, and delighting, gives
The pleasing ecstasy which each receives :
Cherish’d with hope, and fed with joy, it grows, }
Its cheerful buds their opening bloom disclose, }
And round the happy soil diffusive odour flows. }
If angry fate that mutual care denies, }
The fading plant bewails its due supplies : }
Wild with despair, or sick with grief, it dies. }

‘ By force beasts act, and are by force restrain’d ;
The human mind by gentle means is gain’d.
Thy useless strength, mistaken King, employ :
Sated with rage, and ignorant of joy,
Thou shalt not gain what I deny to yield,
Nor reap the harvest, though thou spoil’st the field.
Know, Solomon, thy poor extent of sway ;
Contract thy brow, and Israel shall obey ;
But wilful Love thou must with smiles appease, }
Approach his awful throne by just degrees, }
And, if thou wouldst be happy, learn to please. }

‘ Not that those arts can here successful prove,
For I am destin’d to another’s love.
Beyond the cruel bounds of thy command,
To my dear equal, in my native land,
My plighted vow I gave ; I his receiv’d :
Each swore with truth, with pleasure each believ’d :
The mutual contract was to heaven convey’d ;
In equal scales the busy angels weigh’d
Its solemn force, and clapp’d their wings, and spread
The lasting roll, recording what we said.

‘ Now in my heart behold thy poniard stain’d :
Take the sad life which I have long disdain’d ;
End, in a dying virgin’s wretched fate,
Thy ill-star’d passion and my stedfast hate :
For long as blood informs these circling veins,
Or fleeting breath its latest power retains,
Hear me to Egypt’s vengeful gods declare
Hate is my part ; be thine, O King, despair.

‘ Now strike, (she said, and open’d bare her
Stand it in Judah’s Chronicles confess’d, [breast)
That David’s son, by impious passion mov’d,
Smote a she-slave, and murder’d what he lov’d.’

Asham’d, confus’d, I started from the bed,
And to my soul, yet uncollected, said,
‘ Into thyself, fond Solomon, return ;
Reflect again, and thou again shalt mourn. [sought,
When I through number’d years have pleasure
And in vain hope the wanton phantom caught,
To mock my sense and mortify my pride,
’Tis in another’s power, and is denied.
Am I a king, great Heaven ! does life or death
Hang on the wrath or mercy of my breath,
While kneeling I my servant’s smiles implore,
And one mad damsel dares dispute my pow’r ?’

To ravish her ? that thought was soon depress’d,
Which must debase the monarch to the beast.
To send her back ? O whither, and to whom ?
To lands where Solomon must never come ?
To that insulting rival’s happy arms
For whom, disdaining me, she keeps her charms ?

Fantastic tyrant of the amorous heart,
How hard thy yoke ! how cruel is thy dart ?
Those ’scape thy anger who refuse thy sway,
And those are punish’d most, who most obey.

See Judah's king revere thy greater pow'r ;
 What canst thou covet, or how triumph more ?
 Why then, O Love, with an obdurate ear
 Does this proud nymph reject a monarch's pray'r ?
 Why to some simple shepherd does she run,
 From the fond arms of David's favourite son ?
 Why flies she from the glories of a court,
 Where wealth and pleasure may thy reign support,
 To some poor cottage on the mountain's brow,
 Now bleak with winds, and cover'd now with snow,
 Where pinching want must curb her warm desires,
 And household cares suppress thy genial fires ?

Too aptly the afflicted heathens prove
 The force, while they erect the shrines of Love.
 His mystic form the artizans of Greece
 In wounded stone or molten gold express ;
 And Cyprus to his godhead pays her vow,
 Fast in his hand the idol holds his bow ;
 A quiver by his side sustains his store .
 Of pointed darts, sad emblems of his pow'r ;
 A pair of wings he has, which he extends
 Now to be gone, which now again he bends,
 Prone to return, as best may serve his wanton
 ends. }

Entirely thus I find the fiend pourtray'd,
 Since first, alas ! I saw the beauteous maid ;
 I felt him strike, and now I see him fly :
 Curs'd demon : O ! for ever broken lie
 Those fatal shafts by which I inward bleed !
 O ! can my wishes yet o'ertake thy speed !
 Tir'd may'st thou pant, and hang thy flagging
 wing, }
 Except thou turn'st thy course, resolv'd to bring
 The damsel back, and save the love-sick king. }

My soul thus struggling in the fatal net,
Unable to enjoy or to forget,
I reason'd much, alas! but more I lov'd,
Sent and recall'd, ordain'd and disapprov'd,
'Till, hopeless, plung'd in an abyss of grief,
I from necessity receiv'd relief;
Time gently aided to assuage my pain,
And Wisdom took once more the slacken'd rein.

But O how short my interval of woe!
Our griefs how swift, our remedies how slow!
Another nymph (for so did Heaven ordain,
To change the manner, but renew the pain)
Another nymph, amongst the many fair
That made my softer hours their solemn care,
Before the rest affected still to stand,
And watch'd my eye, preventing my command.
Abra, she so was call'd, did soonest haste
To grace my presence; Abra went the last:
Abra was ready ere I call'd her name,
And though I call'd another, Abra came.

Her equals first observ'd her growing zeal,
And laughing gloss'd, that Abra serv'd so well.
To me her actions did unheeded die,
Or were remark'd but with a common eye,
Till more appriz'd of what the rumour said,
More I observ'd peculiar in the maid.

The sun declin'd had shot his western ray,
When, tir'd with business of the solemn day,
I purpos'd to unbend the evening hours,
And banquet private in the women's bowers.
I call'd before I sat to wash my hands,
For so the precept of the law commands:
Love had ordain'd that it was Abra's turn
To mix the sweets and minister the urn.

With awful homage and submissive dread
 The maid approach'd, on my declining head
 To pour the oils : she trembled as she pour'd ;
 With an unguarded look she now devour'd
 My nearer face : and now recall'd her eye,
 And heav'd, and strove to hide a sudden sigh,
 ' And when (said I) canst thou have dread or pain?
 What can thy imagery of sorrow mean?
 Secluded from the world and all its care,
 Hast thou to grieve or joy, to hope or fear?
 For sure, I added, sure thy little heart
 Ne'er felt Love's anger, or receiv'd his dart.'

Abash'd she blush'd, and with disorder spoke ;
 Her rising shame adorn'd the words it broke.

' If the great master will descend to hear
 The humble series of his handmaid's care,
 O! while she tells it, let him not put on
 The look that awes the nations from the throne :
 O! let not death severe in glory lie
 In the King's frown, and terror of his eye.

' Mine to obey, thy part is to ordain ;
 And though to mention be to suffer pain,
 If the King smiles whilst I my woe recite,
 If weeping I find favour in his sight,
 Flow fast my tears, full rising his delight.

' O! witness earth beneath and heaven above,
 For can I hide it? I am sick of love ;
 If madness may the name of passion bear,
 Or love be call'd what is indeed despair.

' Thou sovereign Power, whose secret will con-
 trols
 The inward bent and motion of our souls !
 Why hast thou plac'd such infinite degrees
 Between the cause and cure of my disease ?

The mighty object of that raging fire
In which unpitied Abra must expire,
Had he been born some simple shepherd's heir,
The lowing herd or fleecy sheep his care,
At morn with him I o'er the hills had run,
Scornful of winter's frost and summer's sun,
Still asking where he made his flock to rest at
noon. }

For him at night, the dear expected guest,
I had with hasty joy prepar'd the feast,
And from the cottage, o'er the distant plain,
Sent forth my longing eye to meet the swain,
Waving, impatient, toss'd by hope and fear,
Till he and joy together should appear,
And the lov'd dog declare his master near. }
On my declining neck and open breast
I should have lull'd the lovely youth to rest,
And from beneath his head at dawning day,
With softest care, have stol'n my arm away,
To rise and from the fold release the sheep,
Fond of his flock, indulgent to his sleep.

' Or if kind Heaven, propitious to my flame,
(For sure from Heaven the faithful ardour came)
Had bless'd my life, and deck'd my natal hour
With height of title and extent of pow'r,
Without a crime my passion had aspir'd,
Found the lov'd prince, and told what I desir'd.

' Then I had come, preventing Sheba's queen,
To see the comeliest of the sons of men ;
To hear the charming poet's amorous song,
And gather honey, falling from his tongue ;
To take the fragrant kisses of his mouth,
Sweeter than breezes of her native south,

Likening his grace, his person, and his mien,
To all that great or beauteous I had seen.
Serene and bright his eyes, as solar beams
Reflecting temper'd light from crystal streams ;
Ruddy as gold his cheek ; his bosom fair
As silver ; the curl'd ringlets of his hair
Black as the raven's wing ; his lip more red
Than eastern coral or the scarlet thread ;
Even his teeth, and white like a young flock, }
Coëval, newly shorn, from the clear-brook
Recent, and blanching on the sunny rock. }
Ivory with sapphires intersper'd, explains
How white his hands, how blue the manly veins ;
Columns of polish'd marble, firmly set
On golden bases, are his legs and feet ;
His stature all majestic, all divine,
Straight as the palm-tree, strong as is the pine ;
Saffron and myrrh are on his garments shed,
And everlasting sweets bloom round his head.
What utter I ? where am I ? wretched maid !
Die, Abra, die ; too plainly hast thou said
Thy soul's desire to meet his high embrace,
And blessing stamp'd upon thy future race ;
To bid attentive nations bless thy womb,
With unborn monarchs charg'd, and Solomons to
come.'

Here o'er her speech her flowing eyes prevail :
' O foolish maid ! and, O unhappy tale !
My suffering heart for ever shall defy
New wounds, and danger from a future eye.
O ! yet my tortur'd senses deep retain }
The wretched memory of my former pain, }
The dire affront, and my Egyptian chain.'

' As time, I said, may happily efface
That cruel image of the King's disgrace,
Imperial Reason shall resume her seat,
And Solomon, once fall'n, again be great.
Betray'd by passion, as subdued in war,
We wisely should exert a double care,
Nor ever ought a second time to err.'

}

This Abra then——

I saw her ; 'twas humanity ; it gave
Some respite to the sorrows of my slave.
Her fond excess proclaim'd her passion true,
And generous pity to that truth was due.
Well I entreated her who well deserv'd ;
I call'd her often, for she always serv'd :
Use made her person easy to my sight,
And ease insensibly produc'd delight.

Whene'er I revell'd in the women's bow'rs,
(For first I sought her but at looser hours)
The apples she had gather'd smelt most sweet,
The cake she kneaded was the savoury meat ;
But fruits their odour lost, and meats their taste,
If gentle Abra had not deck'd the feast :
Dishonour'd did the sparkling goblet stand,
Unless receiv'd from gentle Abra's hand ;
And when the virgins form'd the evening choir,
Raising their voices to the master-lyre,
Too flat I thought this voice, and that too shrill ;
One show'd too much, and one too little skill ;
Nor could my soul approve the music's tone,
Till all was hush'd, and Abra sung alone.
Fairer she seem'd distinguish'd from the rest,
And better mien disclos'd, as better dress'd ;
A bright tiara round her forehead tied,
To juster bounds confin'd its rising pride ;

The blushing ruby on her snowy breast
Render'd its panting whiteness more confess'd;
Bracelets of pearl gave roundness to her arm,
And every gem augmented every charm:
Her senses pleas'd, her beauty still improv'd,
And she more lovely grew as more belov'd.

And now I could behold, avow, and blame,
The several follies of my former flame,
Willing my heart for recompense to prove
The certain joys that lie in prosperous love.
'For what, (said I) from Abra can I fear,
Too humble to insult, too soft to be severe?
The damsel's sole ambition is to please;
With freedom I may like, and quit with ease:
She soothes, but never can enthrall my mind:
Why may not peace and love for once be join'd?'

Great Heav'n! how frail thy creature man is made!
How by himself insensibly betray'd!
In our own strength unhappily secure,
Too little cautious of the adverse pow'r,
And by the blast of self-opinion mov'd,
We wish to charm, and seek to be belov'd.
On pleasure's flowing brink we idly stray,
Masters as yet of our returning way;
Seeing no danger, we disarm our mind,
And give our conduct to the waves and wind;
Then in the flowery mead or verdant shade
To wanton dalliance negligently laid,
We weave the chaplet and we crown the bowl,
And smiling see the nearer waters roll,
Till the strong gusts of raging passion rise,
Till the dire tempest mingles earth and skies,
And swift into the boundless ocean borne,
Our foolish confidence too late we mourn;

Round our devoted heads the billows beat, [treat.
And from our troubled view the lessen'd lands re-

O mighty Love ! from thy unbounded pow'r
How shall the human bosom rest secure ?

How shall our thought avoid the various snare,
Or wisdom to our caution'd soul declare

The different shapes thou pleasest to employ,
When bent to hurt, and certain to destroy ?

The haughty nymph, in open beauty dress'd,
To-day encounters our unguarded breast ;

She looks with majesty, and moves with state :

Unbent her soul, and in misfortune great,

She scorns the world, and dares the rage of Fate. }

Here whilst we take stern manhood for our guide,

And guard our conduct with becoming pride,

Charm'd with the courage in her action shown,

We praise her mind, the image of our own.

She that can please is certain to persuade ;

To-day lov'd, to-morrow is obey'd.

We think we see through reason's optics right,

Nor find how beauty's rays elude our sight :

Struck with her eye whilst we applaud her mind,

And when we speak her great, we wish her kind.

To-morrow, cruel pow'r ! thou arm'st the fair

With flowing sorrow and dishevell'd hair :

Sad her complaint, and humble is her tale,

Her sighs explaining where her accents fail :

Here generous softness warms the honest breast ;

We raise the sad, and succour the distress'd :

And whilst our wish prepares the kind relief,

Whilst pity mitigates her rising grief,

We sicken soon from her contagious care,

Grieve for her sorrows, groan for her despair ;

And against love, too late, those bosoms arm

Which tears can soften, and which sighs can warm,

Against this nearest, cruelest of foes,
What shall wit meditate, or force oppose?
Whence, feeble Nature, shall we summon aid,
If by our pity and our pride betray'd?
External remedy shall we hope to find,
When the close fiend has gain'd our treacherous
mind,

Insulting there does reason's power deride,
And, blind himself, conducts the dazzled guide?

My conqueror now, my lovely Abra, held
My freedom in her chains; my heart was fill'd
With her, with her alone; in her alone
It sought its peace and joy: while she was gone
It sigh'd, and griev'd, impatient of her stay;
Return'd, she chas'd those sighs, that grief, away: }
Her absence made the night; her presence }
brought the day.

The ball, the play, the mask, by turns succeed;
For her I make the song; the dance with her I lead;
I court her, various, in each shape and dress
That luxury may form or thought express.

To-day beneath the palm-tree, on the plains,
In Deborah's arms and habit Abra reigns:
The wreath, denoting conquest, guides her brow,
And low, like Barak, at her feet I bow.
The mimic chorus sings her prosperous hand,
As she had slain the foe, and sav'd the land.

To-morrow she approves a softer air,
Forsakes the pomp and pageantry of war,
The form of peaceful Abigail assumes,
And from the village with the present comes:
The youthful band depose their glittering arms,
Receive her bounties, and recite her charms;
Whilst I assume my father's step and mien,
To meet, with due regard, my future queen.

If hap'ly Abra's will be now inclin'd
To range the woods or chase the flying hind,
Soon as the sun awakes, the sprightly court
Leave their repose, and hasten to the sport.
In lessen'd royalty, and humble state,
Thy king, Jerusalem ! descends to wait
Till Abra comes. She comes ; a milk-white steed,
Mixture of Persia's and Arabia's breed,
Sustains the nymph : her garments flying loose
(As the Sydonian maids or Thracian use)
And half her knee and half her breast appear,
By art, like negligence, disclos'd, and bare :
Her left hand guides the hunting courser's flight,
A silver bow she carries in her right,
And from the golden quiver at her side,
Rustles the ebon arrow's feather'd pride ;
Sapphires and diamonds on her front display
An artificial moon's increasing ray.
Diana, huntress, mistress of the groves,
The favourite Abra speaks, and looks, and moves.
Her, as the present goddess, I obey,
Beneath her feet the captive game I lay ;
The mingled chorus sing Diana's fame,
Clarions and horns in louder peals proclaim
Her mystic praise, the vocal triumphs bound
Against the hills ; the hills reflect the sound.

If, tir'd this evening with the hunted woods,
To the large fish-pools or the glassy floods
Her mind to-morrow points, a thousand bands
To-night employ'd, obey the King's commands.
Upon the watery beach an artful pile
Of planks is join'd, and forms a moving isle ;
A golden chariot in the midst is set,
And silver cygnets seem to feel its weight.

Abra, bright queen, ascends her gaudy throne,
In semblance of the Grecian Venus known ;
'Tritons and sea-green naiads round her move,
And sing in moving strains the force of love ;
Whilst, as the' approaching pageant does appear,
And echoing crowds speak mighty Venus near,
I, her adorer, too devoutly stand
Fast on the utmost margin of the land,
With arms and hopes extended, to receive
The fancied goddess rising from the wave.

O subject Reason! O imperious Love !
Whither yet further would my folly rove ?
Is it enough that Abra should be great
In the wall'd palace or the rural seat ;
That masking habits, and a borrow'd name,
Contrive to hide my plenitude of shame ?
No, no : Jerusalem combin'd must see
My open fault and regal infamy.
Solemn a month is destin'd for the feast ;
Abra invites ; the nation is the guest.
To have the honour of each day sustain'd,
'The woods are travers'd, and the lakes are drain'd :
Arabia's wilds and Egypt's are explor'd ;
The edible creation decks the board :
Hardly the phenix 'scapes——
'The men their lyres, the maids their voices raise,
To sing my happiness and Abra's praise,
And slavish bards our mutual loves rehearse
In lying strains and ignominious verse ;
While from the banquet leading forth the bride,
Whom prudent love from public eyes should hide,
I show her to the world, confess'd and known,
Queen of my heart and partner of my throne.

And now her friends and flatterers fill the court ;
From Dan and from Beersheba they resort ;
They barter places and dispose of grants,
Whole provinces unequal to their wants ;
They teach her to recede or to debate ;
With toys of love to mix affairs of state ;
By practis'd rules her empire to secure,
And in my pleasure make my ruin sure.
They gave, and she transfer'd, the curs'd advice }
That monarchs should their inward soul disguise, }
Dissemble and command, be false and wise ; }
By ignominious arts, for servile ends,
Should compliment their foes and shun their friends.
And now I leave the true and just supports
Of legal princes and of honest courts,
Barzillai's and the fierce Benaiah's heirs,
Whose sires, great partners in my father's cares,
Saluted their young king, at Hebron crown'd,
Great by their toil, and glorious by their wound :
And now, unhappy counsel, I prefer
Those whom my follies only made me fear,
Old Corah's brood and taunting Shimei's race, }
Miscreants who ow'd their lives to David's grace ; }
Though they had spurn'd his rule and curs'd him }
to his face.

Still Abra's pow'r, my scandal, still increas'd ;
Justice submitted to what Abra pleas'd :
Her will alone could settle or revoke,
And law was fix'd by what she latest spoke.

Israel neglected, Abra was my care ;
I only acted, thought, and liv'd for her.
I durst not reason with my wounded heart ;
Abra possess'd ; she was its better part.

O! had I now review'd the famous cause
Which gave my righteous youth so just applause,
In vain on the dissembled mother's tongue
Had cunning art and sly persuasion hung;
And real care in vain, and native love,
In the true parent's panting breast had strove;
While both deceiv'd had seen the destin'd child
Or slain or sav'd, as Abra frown'd or smil'd.

Unknowing to command, proud to obey,
A lifeless king, a royal shade I lay.
Unheard the injur'd orphans now complain;
The widows' cries address the throne in vain.
Causes unjudg'd disgrace the loaded file,
And sleeping laws the king's neglect revile.
No more the elders throng'd around my throne
To hear my maxims, and reform their own;
No more the young nobility were taught
How Moses govern'd, and how David fought.
Loose and undisciplin'd the soldier lay,
Or lost in drink and game the solid day;
Porches and schools, design'd for public good,
Uncover'd. and with scaffolds cumber'd stood,
Or nodded, threatening ruin—
Half pillars wanted their expected height,
And roofs, imperfect, prejudic'd the sight.
The artists grieve; the labouring people droop:
My father's legacy, my country's hope,
God's temples, lie unfinish'd—

The wise and grave deplor'd their monarch's
fate,
And future mischiefs of a sinking state.
' Is this (the serious said) is this the man
Whose active soul through every science ran?

Who by just rule and elevated skill
Prescrib'd the dubious bounds of good and ill?
Whose golden sayings, and immortal wit,
On large phylacteries expressive writ,
Were to the forehead of the rabbins tied,
Our youth's instruction, and our age's pride?
Could not the wise his wild desires restrain?
Then was our hearing, and his preaching vain!
What from his life and letters were we taught,
But that his knowledge aggravates his fault?"

In lighter mood, the humorous and the gay
(As crown'd with roses at their feasts they lay)
Sent the full goblet, charg'd with Abra's name,
And charms superior to their master's fame.
Laughing, some praise the King, who let them see
How aptly luxe and empire might agree:
Some gloss'd, how love and wisdom were at strife,
And brought my Proverbs to confront my life.
'However, friend, here's to the King,' one cries:
'To him who was the King,' the friend replies.
'The King, for Judah's and for wisdom's curse
To Abra yields: could I or thou do worse?
Our looser lives let chance or folly steer,
If thus the prudent and determin'd err.
Let Dinah bind with flowers her flowing hair,
And touch the lute and sound the wanton air;
Let us the bliss without the sting receive,
Free as we will, or to enjoy or leave.
Pleasures on levity's smooth surface flow;
Thought brings the weight that sinks the soul to woe.
Now be this maxim to the King convey'd,
And added to the thousand he has made.'

Sadly, O Reason, is thy power express'd,
Thou gloomy tyrant of the frighted breast!

And harsh the rules which we from thee receive, }
 If for our wisdom we our pleasure give, }
 And more to think be only more to grieve : }
 If Judah's king, at thy tribunal tried,
 Forsakes his joy to vindicate his pride ;
 And, changing sorrows, I am only found
 Loos'd from the chains of love, in thine more strictly
 bound.

But do I call thee tyrant, or complain
 How hard thy laws, how absolute thy reign?
 While thou, alas ! art but an empty name,
 To no two men, whoe'er discours'd, the same ;
 The idle product of a troubled thought,
 In borrow'd shapes and airy colours wrought ;
 A fancied line, and a reflected shade ;
 A chain which man to fetter man has made,
 By artifice impos'd, by fear obey'd.

Yet, wretched name, or arbitrary thing,
 Whence-ever I thy cruel essence bring,
 I own thy influence, for I feel thy sting :
 Reluctant, I perceive thee in my soul,
 Form'd to command, and destin'd to control.
 Yes, thy insulting dictates shall be heard ;
 Virtue for once shall be her own reward :
 Yes, rebel Israel, this unhappy maid
 Shall be dismiss'd ; the crowd shall be obey'd :
 The King his passion and his rule shall leave,
 No longer Abra's but the people's slave :
 My coward soul shall bear its wayward fate ;
 I will, alas ! be wretched to be great,
 And sigh in royalty, and grieve in state.

I said, resolv'd to plunge into my grief
 At once so far as to expect relief
 From my despair alone—

I chose to write the thing I durst not speak
To her I lov'd, to her I must forsake.
The harsh epistle labour'd much to prove
How inconsistent majesty and love.
' I always should (it said) esteem her well,
But never see her more : it bid her feel
No future pain for me ; but instant wed
A lover more proportion'd to her bed,
And quiet dedicate her remnant life
To the just duties of an humble wife.'

She read, and forth to me she wildly ran,
To me, the ease of all her former pain.
She kneel'd, entreated, struggled, threaten'd, cried,
And with alternate passion liv'd and died ;
Till now denied the liberty to mourn,
And by rude fury from my presence torn,
This only object of my real care,
Cut off from hope, abandon'd to despair,
In some few posting fatal hours is hurl'd [world.
From wealth, from power, from love, and from the

Here tell me, if thou dar'st, my conscious soul,
What different sorrows did within thee roll?
What pangs, what fires, what racks, didst thou sus-
What sad vicissitudes of smarting pain? [tain?
How oft from pomp and state did I remove,
To feed despair, and cherish hopeless love?
How oft, all day, recall'd I Abra's charms,
Her beauties press'd, and panting in my arms?
How oft, with sighs, view'd every female face
Where mimic fancy might her likeness trace?
How oft desir'd to fly from Israel's throne,
And live in shades with her and Love alone?
How oft, all night, pursued her in my dreams,
O'er flowery vallies and through crystal streams,

And, waking, view'd with grief the rising sun,
And fondly mourn'd the dear delusion gone ?

When thus the gather'd storms of wretched love
In my swoll'n bosom with long war had strove,
At length they broke their bounds ; at length their
force

Bore down whatever met its stronger course ;
Laid all the civil bonds of manhood waste,
And scatter'd ruin as the torrent past.

So from the hills, whose hollow caves contain
The congregated snow and swelling rain,
Till the full stores their ancient bounds disdain ; }
Precipitate the furious torrent flows :

In vain would speed avoid, or strength oppose :
Towns, forests, herds, and men promiscuous
drown'd, }

With one great death deform the dreary ground ;
The echo'd woes from distant rocks resound. }

And now what impious ways my wishes took,
How they the monarch and the man forsook,
And how I follow'd an abandon'd will,
Through crooked paths and sad retreats of ill ;
How Judah's daughters now, now foreign slaves,
By turns my prostituted bed receives ;

Through tribes of women how I loosely rang'd,
Impatient, lik'd to-night, to-morrow chang'd,

And by the instinct of capricious lust
Enjoy'd, disdain'd, was grateful or unjust ;

O, be these scenes from human eyes conceal'd,
In clouds of decent silence justly veil'd !

O, be the wanton images convey'd
To black oblivion and eternal shade !

Or let their sad epitome alone,
And outward lines, to future age be known,

Enough to propagate the sure belief
That vice engenders shame, and folly broods o'er
Buried in sloth and lost in ease I lay ; [grief.
The night I revell'd, and I slept the day :
New heaps of fuel damp'd my kindling fires,
And daily change extinguish'd young desires.
By its own force destroy'd, fruition ceas'd ;
And always wearied, I was never pleas'd.
No longer now does my neglected mind
Its wonted stores and old ideas find.
Fix'd judgment there no longer does abide,
To take the true, or set the false aside,
No longer does swift memory trace the cells
Where springing wit or young invention dwells.
Frequent debauch to habitude prevails ;
Patience of toil and love of virtue fails.
By sad degrees impair'd, my vigour dies,
Till I command no longer e'en in vice.

The women on my dotage build their sway :
They ask ; I grant : they threaten ; I obey.
In regal garments now I gravely stride,
Aw'd by the Persian damsels' haughty pride ;
Now with the looser Syrian dance and sing,
In robes tuck'd up, opprobrious to the king.

Charm'd by their eyes, their manners I acquire,
And shape my foolishness to their desire ;
Seduc'd and aw'd by the Philistine dame,
At Dagon's shrine I kindle impious flame.
With the Chaldean's charms her rites prevail,
And curling frankincense ascends to Baal.
To each new harlot I new altars dress,
And serve her god whose person I caress.

Where, my deluded sense, was reason flown ?
Where the high majesty of David's throne ?

Where all the maxims of eternal truth,
With which the living God inform'd my youth,
When with the lewd Egyptian I adore
Vain idols, deities that ne'er before
In Israel's land had fix'd their dire abodes,
Beastly divinities, and droves of gods ;
Osiris, Apis, powers that chew the cud,
And dog Anubis, flatterer for his food ?
When in the woody hills' forbidden shade
I carv'd the marble, and invok'd its aid :
When in the fens to snakes and flies, with zeal
Unworthy human thought, I prostrate fell ;
To shrubs and plants my vile devotion paid,
And set the bearded leek to which I pray'd ;
When to all beings sacred rites were giv'n,
Forgot the Arbiter of earth and Heav'n?

Through these sad shades, this chaos in my soul,
Some seeds of light at length began to roll :
The rising motion of an infant ray [day.
Shot glimmering through the cloud, and promis'd
And now one moment able to reflect, }
I found the King abandon'd to neglect, }
Seen without awe, and serv'd without respect. }
I found my subjects amicably join
To lessen their defects, by citing mine.
The priest with pity pray'd for David's race,
And left his text to dwell on my disgrace.
The father, whilst he warn'd his erring son }
The sad examples which he ought to shun, }
Describ'd, and only nam'd not Solomon. }
Each bard, each sire, did to his pupil sing,
' A wise child better than a foolish king.'

Into myself my reason's eye I turn'd,
And, as I much reflected, much I mourn'd.

A mighty king I am, an earthly god,
Nations obey my word, and wait my nod ;
I raise or sink, imprison or set free,
And life or death depends on my decree.
Fond the idea, and the thought is vain ;
O'er Judah's king ten thousand tyrants reign,
Legions of lust, and various powers of ill
Insult the master's tributary will,
And he from whom the nations should receive
Justice and freedom, lies himself a slave,
Tortur'd by cruel change of wild desires,
Lash'd by mad rage, and scorch'd by brutal fires.

O Reason ! once again to thee I call,
Accept my sorrow, and retrieve my fall.
Wisdom, thou say'st, from Heaven receiv'd her birth,
Her beams transmitted to the subject earth :
Yet this great empress of the human soul
Does only with imagin'd pow'r control,
If restless passion, by rebellious sway,
Compels the weak usurper to obey.

O troubled, weak, and coward, as thou art,
Without thy poor advice the labouring heart
To worse extremes with swifter steps would run,
Not sav'd by virtue, yet by vice undone.

Oft have I said, the praise of doing well
Is to the ear as ointment to the smell :
Now if some flies perchance, however small,
Into the alabaster urn should fall,
The odours of the sweets inclos'd would die,
And stench corrupt (sad change !) their place supply :
So the least faults, if mix'd with fairest deed,
Of future ill become the fatal seed ;
Into the balm of purest virtue cast,
Annoy all life with one contagious blast.

Lost Solomon! pursue this thought no more ;
Of thy past errors recollect the store ;
And silent weep. that while the deathless Muse
Shall sing the just, shall o'er their head diffuse
Perfumes with lavish hand, she shall proclaim
Thy crimes alone, and to thy evil fame
Impartial. scatter damps and poisons on thy name.
Awaking therefore, as who long had dream'd,
Much of my women and their gods asham'd,
From this abyss of exemplary vice
Resolv'd, as time might aid my thought, to rise,
Again I bid the mournful goddess write
The fond pursuit of fugitive delight ;
Bid her exalt her melancholy wing,
And, rais'd from earth, and sav'd from passion, sing
Of human hope by cross event destroy'd,
Of useless wealth and greatness unenjoy'd ;
Of lust and love, with their fantastic train,
Their wishes, smiles, and looks, deceitful all, and
vain.

POWER.

BOOK III.

TEXTS CHIEFLY ALLUDED TO IN THIS BOOK.

OR ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, Eccles. chap. xii. ver. 6.

The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose, chap. i. ver. 5.

The wind goeth towards the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually: and the wind returneth again according to his circuits, ver. 6.

All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again, ver. 7.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it, chap. xii. ver. 7.

Now, when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house, 2 Chron. chap. vii. ver. 1.

74 TEXTS CHIEFLY ALLUDED TO IN THIS BOOK.

By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down ;
yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion, &c.
Psal. cxxxvii. ver. 1.

I said of laughter, ‘ It is mad : and of mirth,
What doth it ? ’ Eccles. chap. ii. ver. 2.

—No man can find out the work that God maketh
from the beginning to the end, chap. iii. ver. 11.

—Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever ;
nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from
it : and God doeth it, that men should fear before
him, ver. 14.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter ;
Fear God, and keep his commandments : for this
is the whole duty of man, chap. xii. ver. 13.

POWER.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

Solomon considers man through the several stages and conditions of life, and concludes, in general, that we are all miserable. He reflects more particularly upon the trouble and uncertainty of greatness and power; gives some instances thereof from Adam down to himself; and still concludes that **ALL IS VANITY**. He reasons again upon life, death, and a future being; finds human wisdom too imperfect to resolve his doubts; has recourse to religion; is informed by an angel what shall happen to himself, his family, and his kingdom, till the redemption of Israel: and, upon the whole, resolves to submit his inquiries and anxieties to the will of his Creator.

COME, then, my soul: I call thee by that name,
Thou busy thing, from whence I know I am;
For knowing that I am, I know thou art,
Since that must needs exist which can impart:
But how thou cam'st to be, or whence thy spring,
For various of thee priests and poets sing?

Hear'st thou snbmissive; but a lowly birth,
Some secret particles of finer earth,
A plain effect which Nature must beget,
As motion orders, and as atoms meet,

Companion of the body's good or ill,
From force of instinct more than choice of will,
Conscious of fear or valour, joy or pain,
As the wild courses of the blood ordain ;
Who as degrees of heat and cold prevail,
In youth dost flourish, and with age shalt fail,
Till, mingled with thy partner's latest breath,
Thou fly'st dissolv'd in air and lost in death.

Or if thy great existence would aspire
To causes more sublime, of heavenly fire
Wer't thou a spark struck off, a separate ray,
Ordain'd to mingle with terrestrial clay,
With it condemn'd for certain years to dwell,
To grieve its frailties, and its pains to feel ;
To teach it good and ill, disgrace or fame,
Pale it with rage, or redden it with shame ;
To guide its actions with informing care,
In peace to judge, to conquer in the war ;
Render it agile, witty, valiant, sage,
As fits the various course of human age,
Till as the earthly part decays and falls,
The captive breaks her prison's mouldering walls,
Hovers a while upon the sad remains
Which now the pile or sepulchre contains,
And thence with liberty unbounded flies,
Impatient to regain her native skies ?

Whate'er thou art, where'er ordain'd to go,
(Points which we rather may dispute than know)
Come on, thou little inmate of this breast,
Which, for thy sake, from passions I divest ;
For these, thou say'st, raise all the stormy strife
Which hinder thy repose, and trouble life ;
Be the fair level of thy actions laid
As temperance wills, and prudence may persuade ;

Be thy affections undisturb'd and clear,
Guided to what may great or good appear,
And try if life be worth the liver's care.

}

Amass'd in man, there justly is beheld
What through the whole creation has excell'd ;
The life and growth of plants, of beasts the sense,
The angel's forecast and intelligence ;
Say, from these glorious seeds what harvest flows ?
Recount our blessings, and compare our woes :
In its true light let clearest reason see
The man drag'd out to act, and forc'd to be ;
Helpless and naked, on a woman's knees
To be expos'd or rear'd, as she may please,
Feel her neglect, and pine from her disease :
His tender eye by too direct a ray
Wounded, and flying from unpractis'd day ;
His heart assaulted by invading air,
And beating fervent to the vital war ;
To his young sense how various forms appear,
That strike his wonder and excite his fear ;
By his distortions he reveals his pains ;
He by his tears and by his sighs complains,
Till time and use assist the infant wretch,
By broken words and rudiments of speech
His wants in plainer characters to show,
And paint more perfect figures of his woe.
Condemn'd to sacrifice his childish years
To babbling ignorance, and to empty fears ;
To pass the riper period of his age,
Acting his part upon a crowded stage ;
To lasting toils expos'd, and endless cares,
To open dangers, and to secret snares ;
To malice which the vengeful foe intends,
And the more dangerous love of seeming friends :

}

His deeds examin'd by the people's will,
Prone to forget the good, and blame the ill ;
Or, sadly censur'd in their curs'd debate, }
Who in the scorner's or the judge's seat }
Dare to condemn the virtue which they hate :
Or would he rather leave this frantic scene,
And trees and beasts prefer to courts and men,
In the remotest wood and lonely grot }
Certain to meet that worst of evils, thought, }
Different ideas to his memory brought,
Some intricate, as are the pathless woods,
Impetuous some, as the descending floods ;
With anxious doubts, with raging passions torn,
No sweet companion near with whom to mourn,
He hears the echoing rock return his sighs,
And from himself the frighted hermit flies.

Thus through what path soe'er of life we rove,
Rage companies our hate and grief our love ;
Vex'd with the present moment's heavy gloom,
Why seek we brightness from the years to come ?
Disturb'd and broken, like a sick man's sleep,
Our troubled thoughts to distant prospects leap,
Desirous still what flies us to o'ertake ;
For hope is but the dream of those that wake :
But, looking back, we see the dreadful train }
Of woes a-new, which, were we to sustain, }
We should refuse to tread the path again :
Still adding grief, still counting from the first,
Judging the latest evil still the worst :
And sadly finding each progressive hour
Heighten their number and augment their pow'r ;
Till by one countless sum of woes oppress'd,
Hoary with cares and ignorant of rest,

We find the vital springs relax'd and worn,
Compell'd our common impotence to mourn :
Thus through the round of age to childhood we }
return ;

Reflecting find, that naked from the womb
We yesterday came forth ; that in the tomb
Naked again we must to-morrow lie,
Born to lament, to labour, and to die.

Pass we the ills which each man feels or dreads,
The weight or fall'n or hanging o'er our heads ;
The bear, the lion, terrors of the plain ;
The sheepfold scatter'd, and the shepherd slain ;
The frequent errors of the pathless wood,
The giddy precipice, the dangerous flood ;
The noisome pestilence, that in open war
Terrible, marches through the mid-day air,
And scatters death ; the arrow that, by night,
Cuts the dank mist, and, fatal, wings its flight ;
The billowing snow, and violence of the shower, }
'That from the hills disperse their dreadful store,
And o'er the vales collected ruin pour ;
The worm that gnaws the ripening fruit, sad guest,
Canker or locust, hurtful to infest
The blade ; while husks elude the tiller's care,
And eminence of want distinguishes the year.

Pass we the slow disease and subtile pain
Which our weak frame is destin'd to sustain ;
The cruel stone, with congregated war
Tearing his bloody way ; the cold catarrh,
With frequent impulse and continued strife
Weakening the wasted seats of irksome life ;
The gout's fierce rack, the burning fever's rage,
The sad experience of decay and age,

Herself the sorest ill, while death and ease,
Oft and in vain invoc'd, or to appease
Or end the grief, with hasty wings recede
From the vext patient and the sickly bed.

Nought shall it profit that the charming fair,
Angelic, softest work of Heaven, draws near
To the cold shaking paralytic hand,
Senseless of beauty's touch or love's command,
Nor longer apt or able to fulfil
The dictates of its feeble master's will.

Nought shall the psaltry and the harp avail,
The pleasing song or well-repeated tale,
When the quick spirits their warm march forbear,
And numbing coldness has unbrac'd the ear.

The verdant rising of the flowery hill,
The vale enamell'd, and the crystal rill,
The ocean rolling, and the shelly shore,
Beautiful objects, shall delight no more,
When the lax'd sinews of the weaken'd eye
In watery damps or dim suffusion lie.
Day follows night ; the clouds return again
After the falling of the latter rain,
But to the aged-blind shall ne'er return
Grateful vicissitude ; he still must mourn
The sun, and moon, and every starry light
Eclips'd to him, and lost in everlasting night.

Behold where Age's wretched victim lies ;
See his head trembling, and his half-clos'd eyes ;
Frequent for breath his panting bosom heaves ;
To broken sleeps his remnant sense he gives,
And only by his pains, awaking, finds he lives.

Loos'd by devouring Time, the silver cord
Dissever'd lies ; unhonour'd from the board

The crystal urn, when broken, is thrown by ;
And apter utensils their place supply.
These things and thou must share one equal lot ;
Die, and be lost ; corrupt, and be forgot ;
While still another and another race
Shall now supply, and now give up the place.
From earth all came, to earth must all return,
Frail as the cord, and brittle as the urn.

But be the terror of these ills suppress'd,
And view we man with health and vigour bless'd ;
Home he returns with the declining sun,
His destin'd task of labour hardly done ;
Goes forth again with the ascending ray, }
Again his travail for his bread to pay, }
And find the ill sufficient to the day. }
Haply at night he does with horror shun
A widow'd daughter or a dying son ;
His neighbour's offspring he to-morrow sees,
And doubly feels his want in their increase :
The next day, and the next, he must attend
His foe triumphant or his buried friend.
In every act and turn of life he feels
Public calamities or household ills :
The due reward to just desert refus'd,
The trust betray'd, the nuptial bed abus'd ;
The judge corrupt, the long-depending cause,
And doubtful issue of misconstrued laws ;
The crafty turns of a dishonest state,
And violent will of the wrong-doing great ;
The venom'd tongue injurious to his fame,
Which nor can wisdom shun, nor fair advice reclaim.

Esteem we these, my friends, event and chance,
Produc'd as atoms from their fluttering dance ?

Or high yet their essence may we draw
From destin'd order, and eternal law?
Again, my Muse, the cruel doubt repeat;
Spring they, I say, from accident or fate?
Yet such, we find, they are as can control
The servile actions of our wavering soul;
Can fright, can alter, or can chain the will;
Their ills all built on life, that fundamental ill.

O fatal search! in which the labouring mind,
Still press'd with weight of woe, still hopes to find
A shadow of delight, a dream of peace,
From years of pain one moment of release;
Hoping, at least, she may herself deceive,
Against experience willing to believe:
Desirous to rejoice, condemn'd to grieve.

Happy the mortal man who now, at last,
Has through this doleful vale of misery past,
Who to his destin'd stage has carried on
The tedious load, and laid his burden down;
Whom the cut brass or wounded marble shows
Victor o'er life, and all her train of woes:
He happier yet who, privileg'd by fate
To shorter labour and a lighter weight,
Receiv'd but yesterday the gift of breath,
Order'd to-morrow to return to death:
But, O! beyond description happiest he
Who ne'er must roll on life's tumultuous sea;
Who with bless'd freedom from the general doom
Exempt, must never force the teeming womb,
Nor see the sun, nor sink into the tomb.
Who breathes must suffer, and who thinks must
mourn;
And he alone is bless'd who ne'er was born.

‘ Yet in thy turn, thou frowning Preacher, hear ;
Are not these general maxims too severe ?
Say, cannot power secure its owner’s bliss ?
And is not wealth the potent sire of peace ?
Are victor’s bless’d with fame, or kings with ease ?’ }
}

I tell thee, life is but one common care,
And man was born to suffer and to fear.

‘ But is no rank, no station, no degree,
From this contagious taint of sorrow free ?’

None, mortal, none : yet in a bolder strain
Let me this melancholy truth maintain :
But hence, ye worldly and profane, retire,
For I adapt my voice and raise my lyre
To notions not by vulgar ear receiv’d :
Ye still must covet life and be deceiv’d ;
Your very fear of death shall make ye try
To catch the shade of immortality :
Wishing on earth to linger, and to save
Part of its prey from the devouring grave ;
To those who may survive ye, to bequeath
Something entire, in spite of time and death ;
A fancied kind of being to retrieve,
And in a book or from a building live.
False hope ! vain labour ! let some ages fly,
The dome shall moulder, and the volume die.
Wretches, still taught, still will ye think it strange
That all the parts of this great fabric change,
Quit their old station and primeval frame,
And lose their shape, their essence, and their name ?

Reduce the song : our hopes, our joys are vain ;
Our lot is sorrow, and our portion pain.

What pause from woe, what hopes of comfort
bring

The name of wise or great, of judge or king ?

What is a king? a man condemn'd to bear
The public burden of the nation's care ;
Now crown'd, some angry faction to appease,
Now falls a victim to the people's ease ;
From the first blooming of his ill-taught youth
Nourish'd in flattery, and estrang'd from truth :
At home, surrounded by a servile crowd
Prompt to abuse, and in detraction loud ;
Abroad, begirt with men, and swords, and spears,
His very state acknowledging his fears ;
Marching amidst a thousand guards, he shows
His secret terror of a thousand foes :
In war, however prudent, great, or brave,
To blind events and fickle chance a slave ;
Seeking to settle what for ever flies,
Sure of the toil, uncertain of the prize.

But he returns with conquest on his brow,
Brings up the triumph, and absolves the vow :
The captive generals to his car are tied,
The joyful citizens' tumultuous tide
Echoing his glory, gratify his pride. }
What is this triumph? madness, shouts, and noise,
One great collection of the people's voice.
The wretches he brings back, in chains relate
What may to-morrow be the victor's fate:
The spoils and trophies borne before him show }
National loss, and epidemic woe ;
Various distress, which he and his may know. }
Does he not mourn the valiant thousands slain,
The heroes, once the glory of the plain,
Left in the conflict of the fatal day,
Or the wolf's portion, or the vulture's prey ?
Does he not weep the laurel which he wears,
Wet with the soldiers' blood and widows' tears ?

See, where he comes, the darling of the war!
See millions crowding round the gilded car!
In the vast joys of this ecstatic hour,
And full fruition of successful pow'r,
One moment and one thought might let him scan
The various turns of life, and fickle state of man.
Are the dire images of sad distrust,
And popular change, obscur'd amid the dust
That rises from the victor's rapid wheel?
Can the loud clarion or shrill tife repel
The inward cries of care? can Nature's voice,
Plaintive, be drown'd, or lessen'd in the noise,
Though shouts as thunder loud afflict the air,
Stun the birds, now releas'd, and shake the ivory
chair?

Yon crowd (he might reflect) yon joyful crowd,
Pleas'd with my honours, in my praises loud,
(Should fleeting Victory to the vanquish'd go,
Should she depress my arms and raise the foe)
Would for that foe with equal ardour wait
At the high palace, or the crowded gate;
With restless rage would pull my statues down,
And cast the brass a-new to his renown.

O impotent desire of worldly sway!
That I, who make the triumph of to-day,
May of to-morrow's pomp one part appear,
Ghastly with wounds, and lifeless on the bier!
Then (vileness of mankind!) then of all these
Whom my dilated eye with labour sees,
Would one, alas! repeat me good or great,
Wash my pale body, or bewail my fate?
Or, march'd I chain'd behind the hostile car,
The victor's pastime, and the sport of war,

Would one, would one, his pitying sorrow lend,
Or be so poor to own he was my friend?

Avails it then, O reason, to be wise?
To see this cruel scene with quicker eyes?
To know with more distinction to complain,
And have superior sense in feeling pain?

Let us revolve, that roll with strictest eye
Where safe from time distinguish'd actions lie,
And judge if greatness be exempt from pain,
Or pleasure ever may with power remain.

Adam, great type, for whom the world was
made,
The fairest blessing to his arms convey'd,
A charming wife; and air, and sea, and land,
And all that move therein, to his command
Render'd obedient: say, my pensive Muse,
What did these golden promises produce?—
Scarce tasting life, he was of joy bereav'd;
One day, I think, in Paradise he liv'd,
Destin'd the next his journey to pursue
Where wounding thorns and cursed thistles grew.
Ere yet he earns his bread, a-down his brow,
Inclin'd to earth, his labouring sweat must flow;
His limbs must ache, with daily toils oppress'd,
Ere long-wish'd night brings necessary rest:
Still viewing with regret his darling Eve,
He for her follies and his own must grieve.
Bewailing still afresh their hapless choice,
His ear oft frightened with the imag'd voice
Of Heaven when first it thunder'd, oft his view,
Aghast, as when the infant lightning flew,
And the stern cherub stop'd the fatal road,
Arm'd with the flames of an avenging God;

His younger son, on the polluted ground,
First fruit of death, lies plaintive of a wound
Given by a brother's hand ; his eldest birth
Flies, mark'd by Heaven, a fugitive o'er earth :
Yet why these sorrows heap'd upon the sire,
Becomes nor man nor angel to inquire.

Each age sin'd on, and guilt advanc'd with time ;
The son still added to the father's crime ;
Till God arose, and, great in anger, said,
' Lo ! it repenteth me that man was made.
Withdraw thy light, thou Sun ! be dark, ye Skies !
And from your deep abyss, ye Waters, rise !'

The frighted angels heard the' Almighty Lord, }
And o'er the earth, from wrathful viols, pour'd }
Tempests and storm, obedient to his word. }
Meantime his providence to Noah gave
The guard of all that he design'd to save :
Exempt from general doom the patriarch stood,
Contemn'd the waves, and triumph'd o'er the flood.

The winds fall silent, and the waves decrease ;
The dove brings quiet, and the olive peace ;
Yet still his heart does inward sorrow feel,
Which faith alone forbids him to reveal.
If on the backward world his views are cast,
'Tis death diffus'd, and universal waste.
Present (sad prospect !) can he ought descry
But (what affects his melancholy eye)
The beauties of the ancient fabric lost,
In chains of craggy hill, or lengths of dreary coast ?
While to high Heaven his pious breathings turn'd ;
Weeping, he hop'd ; and sacrificing, mourn'd ;
When of God's image only eight be found
Snatch'd from the watery grave, and sav'd from na-
tions drown'd ;

And of three sons, the future hopes of earth,
The seed whence empires must receive their birth,
One he foresees excluded heavenly grace,
And mark'd with curses, fatal to his race.

Abraham, potent prince, the friend of God,
Of human ills must bear the destin'd load,
By blood and battles must his power maintain,
And slay the monarchs ere he rules the plain;
Must deal just portions of a servile life
To a proud handmaid, and a peevish wife;
Must with the mother leave the weeping son,
In want to wander, and in wilds to groan;
Must take his other child, his age's hope,
To trembling Moriah's melancholy top,
Order'd to drench his knife in filial blood,
Destroy his heir, or disobey his God.

Moses beheld that God; but how beheld
The Deity, in radiant beams conceal'd,
And clouded in a deep abyss of light?
While present, too severe for human sight,
Nor staying longer than one swift-wing'd night:
The following days, and months, and years, de-
creed

To fierce encounter, and to toilsome deed:
His youth with wants and hardships must engage,
Plots and rebellions must disturb his age:
Some Corah still arose, some rebel slave,
Prompter to sink the state than he to save,
And Israel did his rage so far provoke,
That what the Godhead wrote the prophet broke.
His voice scarce heard, his dictates scarce believ'd,
In camps, in arms, in pilgrimage, he liv'd,
And died obedient to severest law,
Forbid to tread the Promis'd-land he saw.

My father's life was one long line of care,
A scene of danger and a state of war :
Alarm'd, expos'd, his childhood must engage
The bear's rough gripe and foaming lion's rage.
By various turns his threaten'd youth must fear
Goliath's lifted sword, and Saul's emitted spear.
Forlorn he must, and persecuted, fly,
Climb the steep mountain, in the cavern lie,
And often ask, and be refus'd to die. }

For ever from his manly toils are known
The weight of power, and anguish of a crown.
What tongue can speak the restless monarch's woes,
When God and Nathan were declar'd his foes?
When every object his offence revil'd,
The husband murder'd, and the wife defil'd, }
The parent's sins impress'd upon the dying child? }
What heart can think the grief which he sustain'd,
When the King's crime brought vengeance on the
And the inexorable prophet's voice [land,
Gave famine, plague, or war, and bid him fix his
choice?

He died ; and, oh ! may no reflection shed
Its poisonous venom on the royal dead :
Yet the unwilling truth must be express'd
Which long has labour'd in this pensive breast ;
Dying, he added to my weight of care ;
He made me to his crimes undoubted heir ;
Left his unfinish'd murder to his son,
And Joab's blood entail'd on Judah's crown.
Young as I was, I hasted to fulfil
The cruel dictates of my parent's will :
Of his fair deeds a distant view I took,
But turn'd the tube upon his faults to look ;

Forgot his youth, spent in his country's cause,
His care of right, his reverence to the laws ;
But could with joy his years of folly trace,
Broken and old, in Bathsheba's embrace ;
Could follow him where'er he stray'd from good, }
And cite his sad example, whilst I trod }
Paths open to deceit, and track'd with blood.
Soon docile to the secret acts of ill,
With smiles I could betray, with temper kill ;
Soon in a brother could a rival view,
Watch all his acts, and all his ways pursue :
In vain for life he to the altar fled ;
Ambition and revenge have certain speed.
Ev'n there, my soul, ev'n there he should have fell,
But that my interest did my rage conceal.
Doubling my crime, I promise and deceive,
Purpose to slay, whilst swearing to forgive :
Treaties, persuasions, sighs, and tears, are vain ;
With a mean lie curs'd vengeance I sustain,
Join fraud to force, and policy to power,
Till of the destin'd fugitive secure,
In solemn state to parricide I rise,
And, as God lives, this day my brother dies.

Be witness to my tears, celestial Muse !
In vain I would forget, in vain excuse
Fraternal blood by my direction spilt ;
In vain on Joab's head transfer the guilt :
'The deed was acted by the subject's hand,
The sword was pointed by the King's command :
Mine was the murder ; it was mine alone :
Years of contrition must the crime atone ;
Nor can my guilty soul expect relief,
But from a long sincerity of grief.

With an imperfect hand and trembling heart,
Her love of truth superior to her art,
Already the reflecting Muse has trac'd
The mournful figures of my actions past.
The pensive goddess has already taught
How vain is hope, and how vexatious thought ;
From growing childhood to declining age,
How tedious every step, how gloomy every stage.
This course of vanity almost complete,
'Tir'd in the field of life, I hope retreat
In the still shades of death ; for dread, and pain,
And grief, will find their shafts elanc'd in vain,
And their points broke, retorted from the head,
Safe in the grave, and free among the dead.

Yet tell me, frightened reason, what is death ?
Blood only stopp'd, and interrupted breath ?
The utmost limit of a narrow span,
And end of motion, which with life began ?
As smoke that rises from the kindling fires
Is seen this moment, and the next expires ;
As empty clouds by rising winds are tost,
'Their fleeting forms scarce sooner found than lost,
So vanishes our state, so pass our days,
So life but opens now, and now decays ;
The cradle and the tomb, alas ! so nigh,
To live is scarce distinguish'd from to die.

Cure of the miser's wish and coward's fear,
Death only shows us what we knew was near :
With courage, therefore, view the pointed hour,
Dread not Death's anger, but expect his power,
Nor Nature's law with fruitless sorrow mourn,
But die, O mortal Man ! for thou wast born.

Cautious through doubt, by want of courage wise,
To such advice the reasoner still replies.

Yet measuring all the long continued space,
Every successive day's repeated race,
Since Time first started from his pristine goal,
Till he had reach'd that hour wherein my soul
Join'd to my body, swell'd the womb, I was
(At least I think so) nothing; must I pass
Again to nothing when this vital breath
Ceasing, consigns me o'er to rest and death?
Must the whole man, amazing thought! return
To the cold marble or contracted urn?
And never shall those particles agree,
That were in life this individual he?
But sever'd, must they join the general mass,
Through other forms and shapes ordain'd to pass, }
Nor thought nor image kept of what he was? }
Does the great Word, that gave him sense, ordain
That life shall never wake that sense again?
And will no power his sinking spirits save
From the dark caves of death, and chambers of
the grave?

Each evening I behold the setting sun
With downward speed into the ocean run;
Yet the same light (pass but some fleeting hours)
Exerts his vigour, and renews his powers;
Starts the bright race again: his constant flame
Rises and sets, returning still the same.
I mark the various fury of the winds,
These neither seasons guide, nor order binds;
They now dilate, and now contract their force;
Various their speed, but endless is their course.
From his first fountain and beginning onze,
Down to the sea each brook and torrent flows;
Though sundry drops or leave or swell the stream,
The whole still runs with equal pace the same;

Still other waves supply the rising urns,
And the eternal flood no want of water mourns.

Why then must man obey the sad decree,
Which subjects neither sun, nor wind, nor sea?

A flower that does with opening morn arise,
And, flourishing the day, at evening dies ;
A winged eastern blast, just skimming o'er
The ocean's brow, and sinking on the shore ;
A fire, whose flame through crackling stubble fly ;
A meteor shooting from the summer-sky ;
A bowl a-down the bending mountain roll'd ;
A bubble breaking, and a fable told ;
A noontide shadow, and a midnight dream,
Are emblems which with semblance apt proclaim
Our earthly course ; but, O my soul ! so fast
Must life run off, and death for ever last !

This dark opinion, sure, is too confin'd,
Else whence this hope and terror of the mind ?
Does something still, and somewhere, yet remain :
Reward or punishment, delight or pain ?
Say, shall our relics second birth receive ?
Sleep we to wake, and only die to live ?
When the sad wife has clos'd her husband's eyes,
And pierc'd the echoing vault with doleful cries,
Lies the pale corpse not yet entirely dead,
The spirit only from the body fled,
The grosser part of heat and motion void,
To be by fire, or worm, or time destroy'd ;
The soul, immortal substance, to remain
Conscious of joy and capable of pain ?
And if her acts have been directed well,
While with her friendly clay she deign'd to dwell,
Shall she with safety reach her pristine seat,
Find her rest endless, and her bliss complete ?

And while the buried man we idly mourn,
Do angels joy to see his better-half return?
But if she has deform'd this earthly life
With murderous rapine and seditious strife,
Amaz'd, repuls'd, and by those angels driven
From the ethereal seat and blissful heaven,
In everlasting darkness must she lie,
Still more unhappy that she cannot die?

Amid two seas, on one small point of land,
Wearied, uncertain, and amaz'd, we stand:
On either side our thoughts incessant turn,
Forward we dread, and looking back we mourn;
Losing the present in this dubious haste,
And lost ourselves betwixt the future and the past.

These cruel doubts contending in my breast,
My reason staggering and my hopes oppress'd,
Once more I said, once more I will inquire
What is this little, agile, pervious fire.
This fluttering motion which we call the Mind,
How does she act? and where is she confin'd?
Have we the power to guide her as we please?
Whence then those evils that obstruct our ease?
We happiness pursue; we fly from pain;
Yet the pursuit, and yet the flight is vain;
And while poor Nature labours to be bless'd,
By day with pleasure, and by night with rest,
Some stronger power eludes our sickly will,
Dashes our rising hope with certain ill,
And makes us, with reflective trouble, see
That all is destin'd which we fancy free.

That Power superior, then, which rules our mind,
Is his decree by human prayer inclin'd?
Will he for sacrifice our sorrows ease?
And can our tears reverse his firm decrees?

Then let religion aid where reason fails,
Throw loads of incense in, to turn the scales,
And let the silent sanctuary show [know, }
What from the babbling schools we may not }
How man may shun or bear his destin'd part of woe. }

What shall amend, or what absolve our fate?
Anxious we hover in a mediate state
Betwixt infinity and nothing ; bounds,
Or boundless terms, whose doubtful sense confounds :
Unequal thought, whilst all we apprehend }
Is, that our hopes must rise, our sorrows end, }
As our Creator deigns to be our friend. }

I said,—and instant bade the priests prepare
The ritual sacrifice and solemn prayer.
Select from vulgar herds, with garlands gay,
A hundred bulls ascend the sacred way :
The artful youth proceed to form the choir,
They breathe the flute, or strike the vocal wire :
The maids in comely order next advance,
They beat the timbrel and instruct the dance :
Follows the chosen tribe, from Levi sprung,
Chanting by just return the holy song.
Along the choir in solemn state they past,
—The anxious King came last.
The sacred hymn perform'd, my promis'd vow
I paid, and, bowing at the altar low,
' Father of heaven ! (I said) and Judge of earth !
Whose word call'd out this universe to birth,
By whose kind power and influencing care
The various creatures move, and live, and are ;
But ceasing once that care, withdrawn that power,
They move (alas !) and live, and are no more ;
Omniscient Master, omnipresent King,
To thee, to thee, my last distress I bring.

‘Thou that canst still the raging of the seas,
Chain up the winds, and bid the tempests cease,
Redeem my shipwreck’d soul from raging gusts
Of cruel passion, and deceitful lusts ;
From storms of rage and dangerous rocks of pride, }
Let thy strong hand this little vessel guide. }
(It was thy hand that made it) through the tide }
Impetuous of this life ; let thy command
Direct my course, and bring me safe to land.

‘If, while this wearied flesh draws fleeting
breath,
Not satisfied with life, afraid of death,
It haply be thy will that I should know
Glimpse of delight or pause from anxious woe ;
From now, from instant now, great Sire ! dispel
The clouds that press my soul ; from now reveal
A gracious beam of light ; from now inspire
My tongue to sing, my hand to touch the lyre ;
My open’d thought to joyous prospects raise,
And for thy mercy let me sing thy praise :
Or, if thy will ordains I still shall wait
Some new hereafter and a future state,
Permit me strength my weight of woe to bear,
And raise my mind superior to my care :
Let me, howe’er unable to explain
The secret labyrinths of thy ways to man,
With humble zeal confess thy awful power,
Still weeping hope, and wondering, still adore :
So in my conquest be thy might declar’d,
And for thy justice be thy name rever’d.’

My prayer scarce ended, a stupendous gloom
Darkens the air ; loud thunder shakes the dome :
To the beginning miracle succeed
An awful silence, and religious dread.

Sudden breaks forth a more than common day ;
The sacred wood, which on the altar lay,
Untouch'd, unlighted, glows—
Ambrosial odour, such as never flows
From Arab's gum, or the Sabæan rose,
Does round the air evolving scents diffuse :
The holy ground is wet with heavenly dew :
Celestial music (such Jessides' lyre,
Such Miriam's timbrel would in vain require)
Strikes to my thought through my admiring ear,
With ecstasy too fine, and pleasure hard to bear :
And, lo ! what sees my ravish'd eye ? what feels
My wondering soul ? an opening cloud reveals
An heavenly form, embodied and array'd
With robes of light : I heard ; the angel said,—
‘ Cease, Man, of woman born, to hope relief
From daily trouble and continued grief.
Thy hope of joy deliver to the wind ;
Suppress thy passions, and prepare thy mind.
Free and familiar with misfortune grow ;
Be us'd to sorrow, and inur'd to woe.
By weakening toil and hoary age o'ercome
See thy decrease, and hasten to thy tomb.
Leave to thy children tumult, strife, and war,
Portions of toil and legacies of care :
Send the successive ills through ages down,
And let each weeping father tell his son
That, deeper struck, and more distinctly griev'd,
He must augment the sorrows he receiv'd,
‘ The child to whose success thy hope is bound,
Ere thou art scarce inter'd, or he is crown'd,
To lust of arbitrary sway inclin'd,
(That cursed poison to the prince's mind!)

Shall from thy dictates and his duty rove,
 And lose his great defence, his people's love :
 Ill counsell'd, vanquish'd, fugitive, disgrac'd,
 Shall mourn the fame of Jacob's strength effac'd :
 Shall sigh the King diminish'd, and the crown
 With lessen'd rays descending to his son :
 Shall see the wreaths his grandsire knew to reap
 By active toil and military sweat,
 Pining incline their sickly leaves, and shed
 Their falling honours from his giddy head :
 By arms or prayer unable to assuage
 Domestic horror and intestine rage ;
 Shall from the victor and the vanquish'd fear,
 From Israel's arrow and from Judah's spear :
 Shall cast his wearied limbs on Jordan's flood,
 By brothers' arms disturb'd, and stain'd with kin-
 dred blood.

' Hence labouring years shall weep their destin'd
 race,

Charg'd with ill omens, sullied with disgrace :
 Time, by necessity compell'd, shall go
 Through scenes of war, and epochas of woe :
 The empire lessen'd, in a parted stream
 Shall lose its course—

Indulge thy tears ; the heathen shall blaspheme ;
 Judah shall fall, oppress'd by grief and shame, }
 And men shall, from her ruins, know her fame. }

' New Egypts yet, and second bonds remain,
 A harsher Pharaoh, and a heavier chain.
 Again, obedient to a dire command,
 Thy captive sons shall leave the Promis'd Land ;
 Their name more low, their servitude more vile,
 Shall on Euphrates' bank renew the grief of Nile.

‘These pointed spires that wound the ambient sky,
Inglorious change! shall in destruction lie
Low, levell’d with the dust, their heights unknown,
Or measur’d by their ruin. Yonder throne,
For lasting glory built, design’d the seat
Of kings for ever bless’d, for ever great,
Remov’d by the invader’s barbarous hand,
Shall grace his triumph in a foreign land ;
The tyrant shall demand yon sacred load
Of gold and vessels set apart to God ;
Then by vile hands to common use debas’d,
Shall send them flowing round his drunken feast, }
With sacrilegious taunt and impious jest.

‘Twice fourteen ages shall their way complete ;
Empires by various turns shall rise and set,
While thy abandon’d tribes shall only know
A different master and a change of woe ;
With downcast eyelids, and with looks aghast,
Shall dread the future or bewail the past.

‘Afflicted Israel shall sit weeping down,
Fast by the streams where Babel’s waters run,
Their harps upon the neighbouring willows hung,
Nor joyous hymn encouraging their tongue,
Nor cheerful dance their feet ; with toil oppress’d,
Their wearied limbs aspiring but to rest.
In the reflective stream the sighing bride,
Viewing her charms impair’d, abash’d shall hide
Her pensive head, and in her languid face }
The bridegroom shall foresee his sickly race,
While pondrous fetters vex their close embrace. }
With irksome anguish then your priests shall
mourn

Their long-neglected feasts’ despair’d return,
And sad oblivion of their solemn days :
Thenceforth their voices they shall only raise,

Louder to weep. By day your frighted seers
Shall call for fountains to express their tears,
And wish their eyes were floods: by night, from
dreams

Of opening gulfs, black storms, and raging flames,
Starting amaz'd, shall to the people show [woe.
Emblems of heavenly wrath, and mystic types of

'The captives, as their tyrant shall require
That they should breathe the song and touch the
Shall say, "Can Jacob's servile race rejoice, [lyre,
Untun'd the music, and disus'd the voice?

What can we play (they shall discourse) how sing
In foreign lands, and to a barbarous king?

We and our fathers, from our childhood bred

To watch the cruel victor's eye, to dread

The arbitrary lash, to bend, to grieve,

(Outcast of mortal race) can we conceive

Image of aught delightful, soft, or gay?

Alas! when we have toil'd the longsome day,

The fullest bliss our hearts aspire to know,

Is but some interval from active woe;

In broken rest and startling sleep to mourn,

Till morn the tyrant and the scourge return:

Bred up in grief, can pleasure be our theme?

Our endless anguish does not Nature claim?

Reason and sorrow are to us the same.

Alas! with wild amazement we require

If idle Folly was not Pleasure's sire?

Madness, we fancy, gave an ill-tim'd birth

To grinning Laughter and to frantic Mirth."

'This is the series of perpetual woe

Which thou, alas! and thine are born to know.

Illustrious wretch! repine not, nor reply;

View not what Heaven ordains with reason's eye;

Too bright the object is, the distance is too high.

The man who would resolve the work of fate,
May limit number and make crooked strait :
Stop thy inquiry, then, and curb thy sense,
Nor let dust argue with Omnipotence.

'Tis God who must dispose, and man sustain,
Born to endure, forbidden to complain :

Thy sum of life must his decrees fulfil ;
What derogates from his command is ill,
And that alone is good which centres in his will. }

‘ Yet that thy labouring senses may not droop,
(Lost to delight, and destitute of hope,)
Remark what I, God’s messenger, aver
From Him, who neither can deceive nor err.
The land, at length redeem’d, shall cease to mourn,
Shall from her sad captivity return :
Sion shall raise her long-dejected head,
And in her courts the law again be read :
Again the glorious Temple shall arise,
And with new lustre pierce the neighbouring skies :
The promis’d seat of empire shall again
Cover the mountain, and command the plain ;
And from thy race distinguish’d, One shall spring
Greater in act than victor, more than king ;
In dignity and power sent down from Heaven
To succour earth. To him, to him ’tis given
Passion, and care, and anguish, to destroy :
Through him soft peace and plenitude of joy
Perpetual o’er the world redeem’d shall flow ;
No more may man inquire, nor angel know.

‘ Now, Solomon, remembering who thou art,
Act through thy remnant life the decent part :
Go forth? be strong ; with patience and with care
Perform and suffer ; to thyself severe,

Gracious to others, thy desires suppress'd,
Diffus'd thy virtues, first of men, be best !
Thy sum of duty let two words contain,
O may they graven in thy heart remain !
Be humble, and be just.' The angel said ;
With upward speed his agile wings he spread,
Whilst on the holy ground I prostrate lay,
By various doubts impell'd, or to obey
Or to object : at length (my mournful look
Heaven-ward erect) determin'd, thus I spoke :

‘ Supreme, all-wise, eternal Potentate !
Sole Author, sole Disposer of our fate !
Enthron'd in light and immortality,
Whom no man fully sees, and none can see !
Original of Beings! Power divine !
Since that I live, and that I think, is thine ;
Benign Creator ! let thy plastic hand
Dispose its own effect : let thy command
Restore, great Father, thy instructed son,
And in my act may thy great will be done !’

ALMA :

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF THE MIND.

IN THREE CANTOS.

Πανία γελως, και πανία κονις, και πανία το μηδεν
Πανία γαρ εξ αλογων εσι τα γιγνομενα.

Incert. ap. Stobæum.

CANTO I.

MATTHEW met Richard¹, when or where
From story is not mighty clear :
Of many knotty points they spoke,
And *pro* and *con* by turns they took :
Rats half the manuscript have ate ;
Dire hunger ! which we still regret ;
O ! may they ne'er again digest
The horrors of so sad a feast :
Yet less our grief, if what remains,
Dear Jacob², by thy care and pains
Shall be to future times convey'd :
It thus begins ;

* * * * Here Matthew said,

¹ Richard Shelton.

² Jacob Tonson, the bookseller.

‘ Alma, in verse ; in prose, the mind ;
By Aristotle’s pen defin’d,
Throughout the body squat or tall,
Is *bonâ fide*, all in all:
And yet, slap dash, is all again
In every sinew, nerve, and vein ;
Runs here and there, like Hamlet’s ghost,
While every where she rules the roast.

‘ This system, Richard, we are told
The men of Oxford firmly hold :
The Cambridge wits, you know, deny
With *ipse dixit* to comply :
They say, (for in good truth they speak
With small respect of that old Greek)
That, putting all his words together,
’Tis three blue beans in one blue bladder.

‘ Alma, they strenuously maintain,
Sits cock-horse on her throne, the brain,
And from that seat of thought dispenses
Her sovereign pleasure to the senses :
Two optic nerves, they say, she ties,
Like spectacles, across the eyes,
By which the spirits bring her word
Whene’er the balls are fix’d or stirr’d ;
How quick at park and play they strike ;
The duke they court ; the toast they like ;
And at St. James’s turn their grace
From former friends, now out of place.

‘ Without these aids, to be more serious,
Her power, they hold, had been precarious :
The eyes might have conspir’d her ruin,
And she not known what they were doing.
Foolish it had been, and unkind,
That they should see, and she be blind.

‘ Wise Nature likewise, they suppose,
Has drawn two conduits down our nose :
Could Alma else with judgment tell
When cabbage stinks, or roses smell?
Or who would ask for her opinion
Between an oyster and an onion ?
For from most bodies, Dick, you know,
Some little bits ask leave to flow,
And as through these canals they roll,
Bring up a sample of the whole ;
Like footmen running before coaches,
To tell the inn what lord approaches.

‘ By nerves about our palate plac’d,
She likewise judges of the taste ;
Else (dismal thought !) our warlike men
Might drink thick Port for fine Champagne,
And our ill-judging wives and daughters
Mistake small-beer for citron-waters.

‘ Hence, too, that she might better hear,
She sets a drum at either ear,
And loud or gentle, harsh or sweet,
Are but the alarums which they beat.

‘ Last, to enjoy her sense of feeling,
(A thing she much delights to deal in)
A thousand little nerves she sends
Quite to our toes’ and fingers’ ends,
And these, in gratitude, again
Return their spirits to the brain ;
In which their figure being printed
(As just before, I think, I hinted)
Alma inform’d can try the case,
As she had been upon the place.

‘ Thus while the judge gives different journies
To country counsel and attorneys,

He on the bench in quiet sits
Deciding, as they bring the writs.
The Pope thus prays and sleeps at Rome,
And very seldom stirs from home,
Yet sending forth his holy spies,
And having heard what they advise,
He rules the church's bless'd dominions,
And sets men's faith by his opinions.

‘ The scholars of the Stagyrte,
Who for the old opinion fight,
Would make their modern friends confess
The difference but from more to less :
The Mind, say they, while you sustain
To hold her station in the brain,
You grant, at least, she is extended,
Ergo, the whole dispute is ended :
For till to-morrow should you plead
From form and structure of the head,
The Mind as visibly is seen
Extended through the whole machine.
Why should all honour then be ta'en
From lower parts to load the brain,
When other limbs we plainly see
Each in his way as brisk as he ?
For music, grant the head receives it,
It is the artist's hand that gives it ?
And though the skull may wear the laurel,
The soldier's arm sustains the quarrel.
Besides, the nostrils, ears, and eyes,
Are not his parts, but his allies :
Ev'n what you hear the tongue proclaim,
Comes *ab origine* from them.
What could the head perform alone,
If all their friendly aids were gone

A foolish figure he must make,
Do nothing else but sleep and ache.

‘ Nor matters it that you can show
How to the head the spirits go ;
Those spirits started from some goal,
Before they through the veins could roll ;
Now we should hold them much to blame,
If they went back before they came.

‘ If, therefore, as we must suppose,
They came from fingers and from toes ;
Or toes or fingers, in this case,
Of numskull’s self should take the place ;
Disputing fair you grant thus much,
That all sensation is but touch.
Dip but your toes into cold water,
Their correspondent teeth will chatter ;
And strike the bottom of your feet,
You set your head into a heat.
The bully heat, and happy lover,
Confess that feeling lies all over.

‘ Note here, Lucretius dares to teach
(As all our youth may learn from Creech)
That eyes were made but could not view,
Nor hands embrace, nor feet pursue,
But heedless Nature did produce
The members first, and then the use :
What each must act was yet unknown,
Till all is mov’d by Chance alone.

‘ A man first builds a country-seat,
Then finds the walls not good to eat.
Another plants, and wondering sees
Nor books nor medals on his trees.
Yet poet and philosopher
Was he who durst such whims aver.

Bless'd, for his sake, be human reason,
That came at all, though late, in season.

‘ But no man sure e’er left his house,
And saddled Ball, with thoughts so wild
To bring a midwife to his spouse,
Before he knew she was with child :

And no man ever reap’d his corn,
Or from the oven drew his bread,
Ere hinds and bakers yet were born,
That taught them both to sow and knead.
Before they’re ask’d can maids refuse?

Can’—‘ Pray, (says Dick) hold in your Muse ;
While you Pindaric truths rehearse,
She hobbles in alternate verse.’

‘ Verse ! (Mat replied) is that my care ?’

‘ Go on, (quoth Richard) soft and fair.’

‘ This looks, friend Dick, as Nature had
But exercis’d the salesman’s trade ;
As if she haply had sat down
And cut out clothes for all the Town,
Then sent them out to Monmouth-street,
To try what persons they would fit ;
But every free and licens’d tailor
Would in this thesis find a failure.
Should whims like these his head perplex,
How could he work for either sex ?
His clothes as atoms might prevail,
Might fit a pismire or a whale.

No, no : he views with studious pleasure
Your shape before he takes your measure :
For real Kate he made the bodice,
And not for an ideal goddess.
No error near his shopboard lurk’d ;
He knew the folks for whom he work’d :

Still to their size he aim'd his skill,
Else, pr'ythee, who would pay his bill?

‘ Next, Dick, if Chance herself should vary,
Observe how matters would miscarry :
Across your eyes, friend, place your shoes,
Your spectacles upon your toes,
Then you and Memmius shall agree
How nicely men would walk or see.

‘ But wisdom, peevish and cross-grain'd,
Must be oppos'd to be sustain'd ;
And still your knowledge will increase,
As you make other people's less.
In arms and science 'tis the same ;
Our rivals' hurts create our fame.
At Faubert's ³, if disputes arise
Among the champions for the prize,
To prove who gave the fairer butt,
John shows the chalk on Robert's coat.
So for the honour of your book,
It tells where other folks mistook,
And as their notions you confound,
Those you invent get farther ground.

‘ The commentators on old Ari-
Stotle ('tis urg'd) in judgment vary :
They to their own conceits have brought
The image of his general thought,
Just as the melancholic eye
Sees fleets and armies in the sky,
And to the poor apprentice' ear
The bells sound ‘ Whittington Lord May'r.’
The conjurer thus explains his scheme ;
Thus spirits walk, and prophets dream ;

³ The fencing and riding-master.

North-Britons thus have second sight,
And Germans, free from gunshot, fight.

‘ Theodoret and Origen,
And fifty other learned men,
Attest, that if their comments find
The traces of their master’s mind,
Alma can ne’er decay nor die :
This flatly t’ other sect deny,
Simplicius, Theophrast, Durand,
Great names, but hard in verse to stand :
They wonder men should have mistook
The tenets of their master’s book,
And hold that Alma yields her breath,
O’ercome by age, and seiz’d by death.
Now which were wise? and which were fools?
Poor Alma sits between two stools ;
The more she reads the more perplex’d,
The comment ruining the text ;
Now fears, now hopes her doubtful fate :
But, Richard, let her look to that—
Whilst we our own affairs pursue.

‘ These different systems, old or new,
A man with half an eye may see
Were only form’d to disagree.
Now to bring things to fair conclusion,
And save much Christian ink’s effusion,
Let me propose an healing scheme,
And sail along the middle stream ;

For, Dick, if we could reconcile
Old Aristotle with Gassendus ;

How many would admire our toil,
And yet how few would comprehend us !

‘ Here, Richard, let my scheme commence :
Oh ! may my words be lost in sense,

While pleased Thalia deigns to write
The slips and bounds of Alma's flight.

' My simple system shall suppose
That Alma enters at the toes ;
That then she mounts, by just degrees,
Up to the ankles, legs, and knees ;
Next, as the sap of life does rise,
She lends her vigour to the thighs ;
And, all these under regions past,
She nestles somewhere near the waist ;
Gives pain or pleasure, grief or laughter,
As we shall show at large hereafter :
Mature, if not improv'd by time,
Up to the heart she loves to climb ;
From thence, compell'd by craft and age,
She makes the head her latest stage.'

' From the feet upward to the head,—
Pithy, and short (says Dick) proceed.'

' Dick, this is not an idle notion ;
Observe the progress of the motion :
First I demonstratively prove,
That feet were only made to move,
And legs desire to come and go,
For they have nothing else to do.

' Hence, long before the child can crawl,
He learns to kick, and wince, and sprawl ;
To hinder which, your midwife knows
To bind those parts extremely close,
Lest Alma, newly enter'd in,
And stunn'd at her own christening's din,
Fearful of future grief and pain,
Should silently sneak out again.
Full piteous seems young Alma's case,
As in a luckless gamester's place,
She would not play, yet must not pass.

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‘ Again, as she grows something stronger,
And master’s feet are swath’d no longer,
If in the night too oft he kicks,
Or shows his loco-motive tricks,
These first assaults fat Kate repays him,
When half-asleep she overlays him.

‘ Now mark, dear Richard, from the age
That children tread this worldly stage,
Broomstaff or poker they bestride,
And round the parlour love to ride,
Till thoughtful father’s pious care
Provides his brood, next Smithfield fair,
With supplemental hobbyhorses ;
And happy be their infant courses !

‘ Hence for some years they ne’er stand still ;
Their legs, you see, direct their will ;
From opening morn till setting sun
Around the fields and woods they run ;
They frisk, and dance, and leap, and play,
Nor heed what Freind or Snape can say.

‘ To her next stage as Alma flies,
And likes, as I have said, the thighs,
With sympathetic power she warms
Their good allies and friends, the arms ;
While Betty dances on the green,
And Susan is at stoolball seen ;
While John for ninepins does declare,
And Roger loves to pitch the bar ;
Both legs and arms spontaneous move,
Which was the thing I meant to prove.

‘ Another motion now she makes :
O, need I name the seat she takes ?
His thought quite chang’d the stripling finds ;
The sport and race no more he minds ;

Neglected Tray and Pointer lie,
And covies unmolested fly :
Sudden the jocund plain he leaves,
And for the nymph in secret grieves :
In dying accents he complains
Of cruel fires and raging pains.
The nymph, too, longs to be alone,
Leaves all the swains and sighs for one :
The nymph is warm'd with young desire,
And feels, and dies to quench his fire.
They meet each evening in the grove ;
Their parley but augments their love ;
So to the priest their case they tell ;
He ties the knot, and all goes well.

‘ But, O my Muse, just distance keep,
Thou art a maid, and must not peep.
In nine month’s time the bodice loose,
And petticoats too short, disclose
That at this age the active mind
About the waist lies most confin’d,
And that young life and quickening sense
Spring from his influence darted thence :
So from the middle of the world
The sun’s prolific rays are hurl’d ;
’Tis from that seat he darts those beams
Which quicken earth with genial flames.’

Dick, who thus long had passive sat,
Here strok’d his chin and cock’d his hat,
Then slapp’d his hand upon the board,
And thus the youth put in his word :
‘ Love’s advocates, sweet sir, would find him
A higher place than you assign’d him.’
‘ Love’s advocates, Dick, who are those ?’—
‘ The poets, you may well suppose.

I'm sorry, sir, you have discarded
The men with whom till now you herded.
Prosemen alone, for private ends,
I thought, forsook their ancient friends.

In cor stillavit, cries Lucretius,
If he may be allow'd to teach us :
The self-same thing soft Ovid says,
(A proper judge in such a case.)
Horace his phrase is *torret jecur*,
And happy was that curious speaker.
Here Virgil, too, has plac'd this passion ;
What signifies too long quotation?
In ode and epic plain the case is,
That Love holds one of these two places.'

' Dick, without passion or reflection,
I'll straight demolish this objection.

' First, poets, all the world agrees,
Write half to profit, half to please :
Matter and figure they produce,
For garnish this, and that for use ;
And, in the structure of their feasts,
They seek to feed and please their guests :
But one may balk this good intent,
And take things otherwise than meant.
Thus, if you dine with my Lord May'r,
Roast beef and ven'son is your fare,
Thence you proceed to swan and bustard,
And persevere in tart and custard :
But tulip-leaves and lemon-peel,
Help only to adorn the meal ;
And painted flags, superb and neat,
Proclaim you welcome to the treat.
' The man of sense his meat devours,
But only smells the peel and flow'rs ;

And he must be an idle dreamer
Who leaves the pie, and gnaws the streamer.

‘ That Cupid goes with bow and arrows,
And Venus keeps her coach and sparrows,
Is all but emblem, to acquaint one
The son is sharp, the mother wanton.
Such images have sometimes shown
A mystic sense, but oftner none ;
For who conceives what bards devise,
That heaven is plac’d in Celia’s eyes?
Or where’s the sense, direct and moral,
That teeth are pearl, or lips are coral?

‘ Your Horace owns he various writ,
As wild or sober maggots bit ;
And where too much the poet ranted,
The sage philosopher recanted :
His grave Epistles may disprove
The wanton Odes he made to love.

‘ Lucretius keeps a mighty pother
With Cupid and his fancied mother ;
Calls her great Queen of earth and air,
Declares that winds and seas obey her,
And, while her honour he rehearses,
Implores her to inspire his verses.
Yet, free from this poetic madness,
Next page he says, in sober sadness,
That she and all her fellow-gods
Sit idling in their high abodes,
Regardless of this world below,
Our health or hanging, weal or woe ;
Nor once disturb their heavenly spirits
With Scapin’s cheats, or Cæsar’s merits.

‘ Nor e’er can Latin poets prove
Where lies the real seat of Love :

Jecur they burn, and *cor* they pierce,
As either best supplies their verse ;
And, if folks ask the reason for't,
Say one was long, and t' other short.
Thus I presume the British Muse
May take the freedom strangers use.
In prose our property is greater ;
Why should it then be less in metre ?
If Cupid throws a single dart,
We make him wound the lover's heart ;
But if he takes his bow and quiver,
'Tis sure he must transfix the liver :
For rhyme with reason may dispense,
And sound has right to govern sense.

‘ But let your friends in verse suppose,
What ne'er shall be allow'd in prose,
Anatomists can make it clear
The liver minds his own affair,
Kindly supplies our public uses,
And parts and strains the vital juices,
Still lays some useful bile aside,
To tinge the chyle's insipid tide,
Else we should want both gibe and satire,
And all be burst with pure good-nature :
Now gall is bitter with a witness,
And love is all delight and sweetness :
My logic then has lost its aim,
If sweet and bitter be the same ;
And he, methinks, is no great scholar
Who can mistake desire for choler.

‘ The like may of the heart be said ;
Courage and terror there are bred.
All those whose hearts are loose and low
Start, if they hear but the tattoo :

And mighty physical their fear is,
For soon as noise of combat near is,
Their heart, descending to their breeches,
Must give their stomach cruel twitches :
But heroes who o'ercome or die,
Have their hearts hung extremely high,
The strings of which, in battle's heat,
Against their very corslets beat,
Keep time with their own trumpet's measure,
And yield them most excessive pleasure.

‘ Now if ’tis chiefly in the heart
That courage does itself exert,
’Twill be prodigious hard to prove
That this is eke the throne of Love.
Would Nature make one place the seat
Of fond desire and fell debate ?
Must people only take delight in
Those hours when they are tir’d with fighting?
And has no man but who has kill’d
A father, right to get a child ?
These notions, then, I think but idle,
And love shall still possess the middle.

‘ This truth more plainly to discover,
Suppose your hero were a lover ;
Though he before had gall and rage,
Which death or conquest must assuage,
He grows dispirited and low,
He hates the fight and shuns the foe.

‘ In scornful sloth Achilles slept,
And for his wench, like Tallboy, wept,
Nor would return to war and slaughter,
Till they brought back the parson's daughter.

‘ Antonius fled from Actium's coast,
Augustus pressing Asia lost :

His sails by Cupid's hand unfurl'd,
To keep the fair, he gave the world.
Edward our Fourth, rever'd and crown'd,
Vigorous in youth, in arms renown'd,
While England's voice and Warwick's care
Design'd him Gallia's beauteous heir,
Chang'd peace and power for rage and wars,
Only to dry one widow's tears.

‘ France's Fourth Henry we may see
A servant to the fair d'Estree ;
When quitting Goutras' prosp'rous field,
And fortune taught at length to yield,
He from his guards and midnight tent,
Disguis'd, o'er hills and vallies went,
To wanton with the sprightly dame,
And in his pleasure lost his fame.

‘ Bold is the critic who dares prove
These heroes were no friends to love ;
And bolder he who dares aver
That they were enemies to war :
Yet when their thought should, now or never,
Have rais'd their heart or fir'd their liver,
Fond Alma to those parts was gone,
Which Love more justly calls his own.

‘ Examples I could cite you more,
But be contented with these four :
For when one's proofs are aptly chosen,
Four are as valid as four dozen.
One came from Greece, and one from Rome ;
The other two grew nearer home :
For some in ancient books delight,
Others prefer what moderns write ;
Now I should be extremely loth
Not to be thought expert in both.’

CANTO II.

BUT shall we take the Muse abroad
To drop her idly on the road,
And leave our subject in the middle,
As Butler did his Bear and Fiddle ?
Yet he, consummate master, knew
When to recede and where pursue :
His noble negligences teach
What others' toils despair to reach.
He, perfect dancer, climbs the rope,
And balances your fear and hope :
If after some distinguish'd leap
He drops his pole and seems to slip,
Straight gathering all his active strength,
He rises higher half his length :
With wonder you approve his sleight,
And owe your pleasure to your fright :
But like poor Andrew I advance,
False mimic of my master's dance ;
Around the cord a while I sprawl,
And thence, though low, in earnest fall.

My preface tells you I digress'd :
He's half absolv'd who has confess'd.

' I like, (quoth Dick) your simile,
And, in return, take two from me.
As masters in the *claire-obscuré*
With various light your eyes allure,
A flaming yellow here they spread,
Draw off in blue, or charge in red ;

Yet from these colours oddly mix'd,
Your sight upon the whole is fix'd :
Or as, again, your courtly dames
(Whose clothes returning birth-day claims)
By arts improve the stuffs they vary,
And things are best as most contrary ;
The gown with stiff embroidery shining,
Looks charming with a slighter lining ;
The out-, if Indian figure stain,
The in-side must be rich and plain :
So you, great authors, have thought fit
To make digression temper wit :
When arguments too fiercely glare,
You calm them with a milder air :
To break their points, you turn their force,
And furbelow the plain discourse.'

' Richard, (quoeth Mat) these words of thine
Speak something sly and something fine ;
But I shall e'en resume my theme,
However thou may'st praise or blame.

' As people marry now and settle,
Fierce Love abates his usual mettle ;
Worldly desires and household cares
Disturb the godhead's soft affairs :
So now, as health or temper changes,
In larger compass Alma ranges ;
This day below, the next above,
As light or solid whimsies move.
So merchant has his house in Town,
And country-seat near Bansted Down ;
From one he dates his foreign letters,
Sends out his goods and duns his debtors ;
In t' other, at his hours of leisure,
He smokes his pipe and takes his pleasure.

‘ And now your matrimonial Cupid,
Lash’d on by Time, grows tir’d and stupid :
For story and experience tell us
That man grows cold, and woman jealous.
Both would their little ends secure ;
He sighs for freedom, she for pow’r :
His wishes tend abroad to roam,
And her’s to domineer at home.
Thus passion flags by slow degrees,
And ruffled more, delighted less,
The busy mind does seldom go
To those once charming seats below ;
But, in the breast encamp’d, prepares
For well-bred feints and future wars.
The man suspects his lady’s crying
(When he last autumn lay a-dying)
Was but to gain him to appoint her,
By codicil, a larger jointure :
The woman finds it all a trick
That he could swoon when she was sick,
And knows that in that grief he reckon’d
On black-ey’d Susan for his second.

‘ Thus having strove some tedious years
With feign’d desires and real fears,
And tir’d with answers and replies
Of John affirms, and Martha lies ;
Leaving this endless altercation,
The mind affects a higher station.

‘ Poltis, that generous King of Thrace
I think was in this very case.
All Asia now was by the ears,
And gods beat up for volunteers
To Greece and Troy, while Poltis sate
In quiet governing his state.

And whence, said the pacific king,
Does all this noise and discord spring?
Why, Paris took Atrides' wife—
With ease I could compose this strife :
The injur'd hero should not lose,
Nor the young lover want, a spouse.
But Helen chang'd her first condition,
Without her husband's just permission.
What from the dame can Paris hope ?
She may as well from him elope.
Again, How can her old good-man
With honour take her back again ?
From hence I logically gather
The woman cannot live with either.
Now I have two right honest wives,
For whose possession no man strives :
One to Atrides I will send,
And t' other to my Trojan friend.
Each prince shall thus with honour have
What both so warmly seem to crave ;
The wrath of gods and man shall cease,
And Poltis live and die in peace.
Dick, if this story pleaseth thee,
Pray thank Dan Pope, who told it me.
‘ Howe'er swift Alma's flight may vary,
(Take this by way of corollary)
Some limbs she finds the very same
In place, and dignity, and name ;
These dwell at such convenient distance,
That each may give his friend assistance.
Thus he who runs or dances, begs
The equal vigour of two legs ;
So much to both does Alma trust,
She ne'er regards which goes the first.

Teague could make neither of them stay,
When with himself he ran away.
The man who struggles in the fight,
Fatigues left arm as well as right ;
For whilst one hand exalts the blow,
And on the earth extends the foe,
T' other would take it wondrous ill
If in your pocket he lay still.
And when you shoot, and shut one eye,
You cannot think he would deny
To lend the other friendly aid,
Or wink as coward, and afraid.
No, sir ; whilst he withdraws his flame,
His comrade takes the surer aim.
One moment if his beams recede,
As soon as e'er the bird is dead,
Opening again, he lays his claim
To half the profit, half the fame,
And helps to pocket up the game.
'Tis thus one tradesman slips away,
To give his partner fairer play.
' Some limbs again, in bulk or stature
Unlike, and not a-kin by nature,
In concert act, like modern friends,
Because one serves the other's ends.
The arm thus waits upon the heart,
So quick to take the bully's part,
That one, though warm, decides more slow
Than t' other executes the blow :
A stander-by may chance to have it,
Ere Hack himself perceives he gave it.
' The amorous eyes thus always go
A-strolling for their friends below ;

For long before the 'squire and dame
Have *tête à tête* reliev'd their flame,
Ere visits yet are brought about,
The eye by sympathy looks out,
Knows Florimel, and longs to meet her,
And if he sees, is sure to greet her,
Though at sash-window, on the stairs,
At court, nay, (authors say) at pray'rs.—

‘ The funeral of some valiant knight
May give this thing its proper light.
View his two gauntlets ; these declare
That both his hands were us'd to war ;
And from his two gilt spurs 'tis learn'd
His feet were equally concern'd :
But have you not with thought beheld
The sword hang dangling o'er the shield ?
Which shows the breast that plate was us'd to,
Had an ally right-arm to trust to ;
And by the peep-holes in his crest,
Is it not virtually confess'd
That there his eye took distant aim,
And glanc'd respect to that bright dame
In whose delight his hope was center'd,
And for whose glove his life he ventur'd ?

‘ Objections to my general System
May rise, perhaps, and I have miss'd them ;
But I can call to my assistance
Proximity (mark that !) and distance ;
Can prove that all things, on occasion,
Love union, and desire adhesion ;
That Alma merely is a scale,
And motives, like the weights, prevail :
If neither side turn down or up,
With loss or gain, with fear or hope,

The balance always would hang even,
Like Mah'met's tomb, 'twixt earth and heaven.

' This, Richard, is a curious case :
Suppose your eyes sent equal rays
Upon two distant pots of ale,
Not knowing which was mild or stale ;
In this sad state your doubtful choice
Would never have the casting voice ;
Which best or worst you could not think,
And die you must for want of drink,
Unless some chance inclines your sight,
Setting one pot in fairer light ;
Then you prefer or A or B,
As lines and angles best agree ;
Your sense resolv'd, impels your will ;
She guides your hand—So drink your fill.

' Have you not seen a baker's maid
Between two equal panniers sway'd ?
Her tallies useless lie and idle,
If plac'd exactly in the middle ;
But forc'd from this unactive state,
By virtue of some casual weight,
On either side you hear them clatter,
And judge of right and left hand matter.

' Now, Richard, this coercive force
Without your choice must take its course.
Great kings to wars are pointed forth,
Like loaded needles to the North,
And thou and I, by power unseen,
Are barely passive, and suck'd in
To Henault's vaults or Celia's chamber,
As straw and paper are by amber.
If we sit down to play or set
(Suppose at Ombre or Basset)

Let people call us cheats or fools,
Our cards and we are equal tools.
We sure in vain the cards condemn ;
Ourselves both cut and shuffled them :
In vain on Fortune's aid rely ;
She only is a stander-by.

Poor men ! poor papers ! we and they
Do some impulsive force obey,
And are but play'd with—do not play.
But space and matter we should blame ;
They palm'd the trick that lost the game.

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‘ Thus to save further contradiction
Against what you may think but fiction,
I for attraction, Dick, declare,
Deny it those bold men that dare.
As well your motion as your thought
Is all by hidden impulse wrought ;
Ev'n saying that you think or walk,
How like a country 'squire you talk ?

‘ Mark then ;—Where fancy or desire
Collects the beams of vital fire,
Into that limb fair Alma slides,
And there, *pro tempore*, resides ;
She dwells in Nicolini's tongue,
When Pyrrhus chants the heavenly song ;
When Pedro does the late command,
She guides the cunning artist's hand ;
Through Macer's gullet she runs down,
When the vile glutton dines alone ;
And, void of modesty and thought,
She follows Bibo's endless draught.
Through the soft sex again she ranges,
As youth, caprice, or fashion, changes :

Fair Alma, careless and serene,
In Fanny's sprightly eyes is seen,
While they diffuse their infant beams,
Themselves not conscious of their flames.
Again, fair Alma sits confess'd
On Florimel's experter breast,
When she the rising sigh constrains,
And, by concealing, speaks her pains.
In Cynthia's neck fair Alma glows,
When the vain thing her jewels shows ;
When Jenny's stays are newly lac'd,
Fair Alma plays about her waist ;
And when the swelling hoop sustains
The rich brocade, fair Alma deigns
Into that lower space to enter,
Of the large round herself the centre.

‘ Again ; that single limb or feature
(Such is the cogent force of Nature)
Which most did Alma's passion move,
Is the first object of her love,
For ever will be found confess'd,
And printed on the amorous breast.

‘ O Abelard ! ill-fated youth,
Thy tale will justify this truth ;
But well I weet thy cruel wrong
Adorns a nobler poet's song :
Dan Pope, for thy misfortune griev'd,
With kind concern and skill has weav'd
A silken web, and ne'er shall fade
Its colours gently ; as he laid
The mantle o'er thy sad distress,
And Venus shall the texture bless.
He o'er the weeping nun has drawn
Such artful folds of sacred lawn,

That Love, with equal grief and pride,
Shall see the crime he strives to hide,
And softly drawing back the veil,
The god shall to his votaries tell
Each conscious tear, each blushing grace,
That deck'd dear Eloïsa's face.

Happy the poet, bless'd the lays,
Which Buckingham has deign'd to praise.

‘ Next, Dick, as youth and habit sways,
A hundred gambols Alma plays.
If, whilst a boy, Jack run from school,
Fond of his hunting-horn and pole,
Though gout and age his speed detain,
Old John halloos his hounds again :
By his fire-side he starts the hare,
And turns her in his wicker-chair.
His feet, however lame, you find,
Have got the better of his mind.

‘ If, while the Mind was in her leg,
The dance affected nimble Peg,
Old Madge bewitch'd, at sixty-one
Calls for Green-Sleeves and Jump'ng-Joan.
In public mask or private ball,
From Lincoln's-Inn to Goldsmith's-Hall,
All Christmas long away she trudges,
Trips it with 'prentices and judges ;
In vain her children urge her stay,
And age or palsy bar the way :
But if those images prevail,
Which whilom did affect the tail,
She still reviews the ancient scene,
Forgets the forty years between ;
Awkwardly gay, and oddly merry,
Her scarf pale pink, her headknot cherry,

O'erheated with ideal rage,
She cheats her son to wed her page.

‘ If Alma, whilst the man was young,
Slipp’d up too soon into his tongue,
Pleas’d with his own fantastic skill,
He lets that weapon ne’er lie still :
On any point if you dispute,
Depend upon it he’ll confute :
Change sides, and you increase your pain ;
For he’ll confute you back again :
For one may speak with Tully’s tongue,
Yet all the while be in the wrong ;
And ’tis remarkable that they
Talk most, who have the least to say.
Your dainty speakers have the curse
To plead bad causes down to worst ;
As dames who native beauty want,
Still uglier look the more they paint.

‘ Again ; if in the female sex
Alma should on this member fix,
(A cruel and a desperate case,
From which heaven shield my lovely lass!)
For evermore all care is vain
That would bring Alma down again.
As in habitual gout or stone,
The only thing that can be done
Is to correct your drink and diet,
And keep the inward foe in quiet ;
So if for any sins of ours,
Or our forefathers, higher powers,
Severe though just, afflict our life
With that prime ill, a talking wife,
Till death shall bring the kind relief,
We must be patient or be deaf.

‘ You know a certain lady, Dick,
Who saw me when I last was sick ;
She kindly talk’d, at least three hours,
Of plastic forms, and mental pow’rs ;
Describ’d our pre-existing station,
Before this vile terrene creation ;
And, lest I should be wearied, Madam,
To cut things short, came down to Adam ;
From whence, as fast as she was able,
She drowns the world, and builds up Babel :
Through Syria, Persia, Greece, she goes,
And takes the Romans in the close.

‘ But we’ll descant on general nature ;
This is a system, not a satire.

‘ Turn we this globe, and let us see
How different nations disagree
In what we wear, or eat, and drink ;
Nay, Dick, perhaps in what we think.
In water as you smell and taste
The soils through which it rose and past,
In Alma’s manners you may read
The place where she was born and bred.

‘ One people from their swaddling-bands
Releas’d their infants’ feet and hands :
Here Alma to these limbs was brought,
And Sparta’s offspring kick’d and fought.
Another taught their babes to talk,
Ere they could yet in go-carts walk :
There Alma settled in the tongue,
And orators from Athens sprung.

‘ Observe but in these neighbouring lands
The different use of mouths and hands ;
As men repos’d their various hopes,
In battles these, and those in tropes.

‘ In Britain’s isles, as Heylin notes,
The ladies trip in petticoats,
Which, for the honour of their nation,
They quit but on some great occasion :
Men there in breeches clad you view ;
They claim that garment as their due.
In Turkey the reverse appears ;
Long coats the haughty husband wears,
And greets his wife with angry speeches,
If she be seen without her breeches.

‘ In our fantastic climes, the fair
With cleanly powder dry their hair,
And round their lovely breast and head
Fresh flowers their mingled odours shed :
Your nicer Hottentots think meet
With guts and tripe to deck their feet !
With downcast looks on Totta’s legs
The ogling youth most humbly begs
She would not from his hopes remove
At once his breakfast and his love ;
And if the skittish nymph should fly,
He in a double sense must die.

‘ We simple toasters take delight
To see our women’s teeth look white,
And every saucy ill-bred fellow
Sneers at a mouth profoundly yellow.
In China none hold women sweet
Except their snags are black as jet :
King Chibu put nine queens to death,
Convict on statute, *irory teeth*.

‘ At Tonquin if a prince should die,
(As Jesuits write, who never lie)
The wife, and counsellor, and priest,
Who serv’d him most and lov’d him best,

Prepare and light his funeral fire,
And cheerful on the pile expire.
In Europe 'twould be hard to find
In each degree one half so kind.

‘ Now turn we to the farthest East,
And there observe the gentry dress'd.
Prince Giolo and his royal sisters,
Scar'd with ten thousand comely blisters,
The marks remaining on the skin,
To tell the quality within :
Distinguish'd flashes deck the great,
As each excels in birth or state ;
His eyelet-holes are more and ampler ;
The king's own body was a sampler.
Happy the climate where the bean
Wears the same suit for use and show ;
And at a small expense your wife,
If once well pink'd, is cloth'd for life.

‘ Westward again, the Indian fair
Is nicely smear'd with fat of bear :
Before you see, you smell your toast,
And sweetest she who stinks the most.
The finest sparks and cleanest beaux
Drip from the shoulders to the toes.
How sleek their skins ! their joints how easy !
There slovens only are not greasy.

‘ I mention'd different ways of breeding :
Begin we in our children's reading.
To Master John the English maid
A horn-book gives of gingerbread,
And that the child may learn the better,
As he can name, he eats the letter ;
Proceeding thus with vast delight,
He spells and gnaws from left to right.

But show a Hebrew's hopeful son
Where we suppose the book begun,
The child would thank you for your kindness,
And read quite backward from our *finis*:
Devour he learning ne'er so fast,
Great A would be reserv'd the last.

‘An equal instance of this matter
Is in the manners of a daughter.
In Europe if a harmless maid,
By Nature and by Love betray'd,
Should, ere a wife, become a nurse,
Her friends would look on her the worse.
In China, Dampier's Travels tell ye,
(Look in his index for Pagelli)
Soon as the British ships unmoor,
And jolly longboat rows to shore,
Down come the nobles of the land,
Each brings his daughter in his hand,
Beseeching the imperious tar
To make her but one hour his care;
The tender mother stands affrighted,
Lest her dear daughter should be slighted;
And poor Miss Yaya dreads the shame
Of going back the maid she came.

‘Observe how custom, Dick, compels
The lady that in Europe dwells:
After her tea she slips away,
And what to do, one need not say.
Now see how great Pomonque's queen
Behav'd herself amongst the men;
Pleas'd with her punch, the gallant soul
First drank, then water'd in the bowl,
And sprinkled in the captain's face
The marks of her peculiar grace—

‘ To close this point, we need not roam
For instances so far from home.
What parts gay France from sober Spain?
A little rising rocky chain.
Of men born south or north o’ the hill,
Those seldom move, these ne’er stand still.
Dick, you love maps, and may perceive
Rome not far distant from Geneve.
If the good Pope remains at home,
He’s the first prince in Christendom.
Choose then, good Pope, at home to stay,
Nor westward, curious, take thy way ;
Thy way, unhappy, shouldst thou take
From Tiber’s bank to Leman-lake,
Thou art an aged priest no more,
But a young flaring painted whore :
Thy sex is lost ; thy town is gone ;
No longer Rome, but Babylon.
That some few leagues should make this change,
To men unlearn’d seems mighty strange.

‘ But need we, friend, insist on this?
Since in the very Cantons Swiss,
All your philosophers agree,
And prove it plain, that one may be
A heretic or true believer,
On this or t’other side a river.’

Here with an artful smile, quoth Dick,
‘ Your proofs come mighty full and thick—’

The bard, on this extensive chapter
Wound up into poetic rapture,
Continued : ‘ Richard, cast your eye
By night upon a winter-sky ;
Cast it by day-light on the strand
Which compasses fair Albion’s land ;

If you can count the stars that glow
Above, or sands that lie below,
Into these common-places look
Which from great authors I have took,
And count the proofs I have collected,
To have my writings well protected :
These I lay by for time of need,
And thou may'st at thy leisure read :
For standing every critic's rage,
I safely will to future age
My System, as a gift, bequeath,
Victorious over spite and death.'

CANTO III.

RICHARD, who now was half asleep,
Rous'd, nor would longer silence keep ;
And sense like this, in vocal breath,
Broke from his twofold hedge of teeth.
Now if this phrase too harsh be thought,
Pope, tell the world 'tis not my fault ;
Old Homer taught us thus to speak :
If 'tis not sense, at least 'tis Greek.

' As folks, (quoth Richard) prone to leasing,
Say things at first because they're pleasing,
Then prove what they have once asserted,
Nor care to have their lie deserted,
Till their own dreams at length deceive them,
And, oft repeating, they believe them ;
Or as, again, those amorous blades
Who trifle with their mothers' maids,
Though at the first their wild desire
Was but to quench a present fire,

Yet if the object of their love
Chance by Lucina's aid to prove,—
They seldom let the bantling roar
In basket at a neighbour's door,
But by the flattering glass of Nature
Viewing themselves in Cakebread's feature,
With serious thought and care support
What only was begun in sport :
Just so with you, my friend, it fares,
Who deal in philosophic wares ;
Atoms you cut, and forms you measure,
To gratify your private pleasure,
Till airy seeds of casual wit
Do some fantastic birth beget :
And pleas'd to find your system mended
Beyond what you at first intended,
The happy whimsey you pursue,
Till you at length believe it true :
Caught by your own delusive art,
You fancy first, and then assert.'

Quoth Matthew ; ' Friend, as far as I
Through Art or Nature cast my eye,
This axiom clearly I discern,
That one must teach and t'other learn.
No fool Pythagoras was thought ;
Whilst he his weighty doctrines taught,
He made his listening scholars stand,
Their mouth still cover'd with their hand ;
Else, may be, some odd-thinking youth,
Less friend to doctrine than to truth,
Might have refus'd to let his ears
Attend the music of the spheres,
Denied all transmigrating scenes,
And introduc'd the use of beans.

From great Lucretius take his void,
And all the world is quite destroy'd.
Deny Descartes his subtile matter,
You leave him neither fire nor water.
How oddly would Sir Isaac look,
If you, in answer to his book,
Say in the front of your discourse,
That things have no elastic force?
How could our chymic friends go on
To find the philosophic stone,
If you more powerful reasons bring
To prove that there is no such thing?
' Your chiefs in sciences and arts
Have great contempt of Alma's parts:
They find she giddy is, or dull,
She doubts if things are void or full;
And who should be presum'd to tell
What she herself should see or feel?
She doubts if two and two make four,
Though she has told them ten times o'er.
It can't—it may be—and it must;
To which of these must Alma trust?
Nay, further yet they make her go,
In doubting if she doubts or no.
Can syllogism set things right?
No; majors soon with minors fight;
Or, both in friendly consort join'd,
The consequence limps false behind.
So to some cunning man she goes,
And asks of him how much she knows;
With patience grave he hears her speak,
And from his short notes gives her back,
What from her tale he comprehended;
Thus the dispute is wisely ended.

From the account the loser brings,
The conjuror knows who stole the things.'

'Squire (interrupted Dick) since when
Were you amongst these cunning men?

'Dear Dick, (quoth Mat) let not thy force
Of eloquence spoil my discourse :

I tell thee this is Alma's case,
Still asking what some wise man says,
Who does his mind in words reveal,
Which all must grant, though few can spell.

You tell your doctor that you're ill,
And what does he but write a bill?
Of which you need not read one letter ;
The worse the scrawl, the dose the better
For if you knew but what you take,
Though you recover, he must break.

'Ideas, forms, and intellects,
Have furnish'd out three different sects.
Substance or accident divides
All Europe into adverse sides.

'Now as, engag'd in arms or laws,
You must have friends to back your cause,
In philosophic matters so
Your judgment must with others go :
For as in senates so in schools,
Majority of voices rules.

'Poor Alma, like a lonely deer,
O'er hills and dales does doubtful err :
With panting haste and quick surprise,
From every leaf that stirs she flies,
Till mingled with the neighbouring herd,
She slights what erst she singly fear'd.
And now exempt from doubt and dread,
She dares pursue if they dare lead ;

As their example still prevails,
She tempts the stream, or leaps the pales.'
' He, then, (quoth Dick) who by your rule
Thinks for himself, becomes a fool ;
As party-man who leaves the rest,
Is call'd but whimsical ¹ at best.
Now, by your favour, Master Mat,
Like Ralpho, here I smell a rat.
I must be listed in your sect,
Who, though they teach not, can protect.'
' Right, Richard, (Mat in triumph cried)
So put off all mistrust and pride ;
And while my principles I beg,
Pray answer only with your leg.
Believe what friendly I advise ;
Be first secure, and then be wise.
The man within the coach that sits,
And to another's skill submits,
Is safer much (whate'er arrives)
And warmer too, than he that drives.
' So, Dick adept, tuck back thy hair,
And I will pour into thy ear
Remarks, which none did e'er disclose
In smooth-pac'd verse, or hobbling prose.
Attend, dear Dick, but don't reply,
And thou may'st prove as wise as I.
' When Alma now in different ages
Has finish'd her ascending stages,
Into the head at length she gets,
And there in public grandeur sits,
To judge of things, and censure wits.

¹ Some of the Tories in the reign of Queen Anne were distinguished by that appellation.

‘ Here, Richard, how could I explain
The various labyrinths of the brain !
Surprise my readers, whilst I tell them
Of *cerebrum* and *cerebellum* ?
How could I play the commentator
On *dura* and on *pia mater* ?
Where hot and cold, and dry and wet,
Strive each the other’s place to get,
And with incessant toil and strife
Would keep possession during life ?
I could demonstrate every pore
Where Memory lays up all her store,
And to an inch compute the station
’Twixt judgment and imagination :
O friend ! I could display much learning,
At least to men of small discerning.
The brain contains ten thousand cells,
In each some active fancy dwells,
Which always is at work, and framing
The several follies I was naming.
As in a hive’s vinaceous ² dome,
Ten thousand bees enjoy their home,
Each does her studious action vary,
To go and come, to fetch and carry :
Each still renews her little labour,
Nor jostles her assiduous neighbour ;
Each—Whilst this thesis I maintain,
I fancy, Dick, I know thy brain.
O, with the mighty theme affected,
Could I but see thy head dissected !’
‘ My head, (quoth Dick) to serve your whim ?
Spare that, and take some other limb.

* Made of twigs or wicker.

Sir, in your nice affairs of System,
Wise men propose, but fools assist them.'

Says Matthew; 'Richard, keep thy head,
And hold thy peace, and I'll proceed.'

'Proceed? (quoth Dick) Sir, I aver
You have already gone too far.

When people once are in the wrong,
Each line they add is much too long.
Who fastest walks, but walks astray,
Is only furthest from his way.

Bless your conceits! must I believe,
Howe'er absurd, what you conceive,
And for your friendship live and die
A papist in philosophy?

I say whatever you maintain
Of Alma in the heart or brain,
The plainest man alive may tell ye
Her seat of empire is the belly;
From hence she sends out those supplies
Which make us either stout or wise:

The strength of every other member
Is founded on your belly-timber:
The qualms or raptures of your blood
Rise in proportion to your food;
And if you would improve your thought,
You must be fed as well as taught:

Your stomach makes your fabric roll,
Just as the bias rules the bowl.

That great Achilles might employ
'The strength design'd to ruin Troy,
He din'd on lion's marrow, spread
On toasts of ammunition-bread;
But by his mother sent away
Amongst the Thracian girls to play.

Effeminate he sat, and quiet ;
Strange product of a cheesecake diet !
Now give my argument fair play,
And take the thing the other way.
The youngster who at nine and three
Drinks with his sisters milk and tea,
From breakfast reads, till twelve o'clock,
Burnet and Heylin, Hobbes and Locke ;
He pays due visits after noon,
To Cousin Al'ce and Uncle John ;
At ten, from coffeehouse or play,
Returning, finishes the day :
But give him port and potent sack,
From milksop he starts up Mohack ;
Holds that the happy know no hours ;
So through the street at midnight scours ;
Breaks watchmen's heads and chairmen's glasses,
And thence proceeds to nicking sashes ;
Till by some tougher hand o'ercome,
And first knock'd down, and then led home,
He damns the footman, strikes the maid,
And decently reels up to bed.

‘ Observe the various operations
Of food and drink in several nations.
Was ever Tartar fierce or cruel
Upon the strength of watergruel ?
But who shall stand his rage and force,
If first he rides, then eats his horse ?
Salads, and eggs, and lighter fare,
Tune the Italian spark's guitar :
And, if I take Dan Congreve right,
Pudding and beef make Britons fight.
Tokay and coffee cause this work
Between the German and the Turk ;

And both as they provisions want,
Chicane, avoid, retire, and faint.

‘ Hunger and thirst, or guns and swords,
Give the same death in different words :
To push this argument no further,
To starve a man in law is murder.

‘ As in a watch’s fine machine
Though many artful springs are seen,
The added movements, which declare
How full the moon, how old the year,
Derive their secondary power
From that which simply points the hour :
For though those gimcracks were away,
(Quare would not swear, but Quare would say)
However more reduc’d and plain,
The watch would still a watch remain ;
But if the horal orbit ceases,
The whole stands still, or breaks to pieces ;
Is now no longer what it was,
And you may e’en go sell the case.
So if, unprejudic’d, you scan
The goings of this clockwork, Man ;
You find a hundred movements made
By fine devices in his head ;
But ’tis the stomach’s solid stroke
That tells his being what’s o’clock.
If you take off his rhetoric-trigger,
He talks no more in mood and figure ;
Or, clog his mathematic-wheel,
His buildings fall, his ship stands still :
Or, lastly, break his politic-weight,
His voice no longer rules the state :
Yet if these finer whims were gone,
Your clock though plain, would still go on ;

But spoil the engine of digestion,
And you entirely change the question.
Alma's affairs no power can mend ;
The jest, alas ! is at an end ;
Soon ceases all this wordly bustle,
And you consign the corpse to Russel³.

‘ Now make your Alma come or go,
From leg to hand, from top to toe,
Your System, without my addition,
Is in a very sad condition.
So Harlequin extoll'd his horse
Fit for the war, or road, or course ;
His mouth was soft, his eye was good,
His foot was sure as ever trod ;
One fault he had, a fault indeed ;
And what was that ? the horse was dead.’

‘ Dick, from these instances and fetches
Thou mak'st of horses, clocks, and watches,
(Quoth Mat) to me thou seem'st to mean
That Alma is a mere machine ;
That telling others what's o'clock,
She knows not what herself has struck,
But leaves to standers-by the trial
Of what is mark'd upon her dial.’

‘ Here hold ; a blow, good friend, (quoth Dick)
And rais'd his voice exceeding quick.
Fight fair, sir : what, I never meant
Don't you infer. In argument
Similes are like songs in love :
They much describe, they nothing prove.’

Mat, who was here a little gravell'd,
Toss'd up his nose, and would have cavill'd ;

³ A popular undertaker, mentioned also by Garth, in his Dispensary.

But calling Hermes to his aid,
Half pleas'd, half angry, thus he said :
Where mind ('tis for the author's fame)
That Matthew call'd, and Hermes came.
In danger heroes, and in doubt,
Poets find gods to help them out.

' Friend Richard, I begin to see
That you and I shall scarce agree.
Observe how oddly you behave ;
The more I grant, the more you crave :
But, comrade, as I said just now,
I should affirm, and you allow.
We system-makers can sustain
The thesis which you grant was plain,
And with remarks and comments tease ye,
In case the thing before was easy :
But in a point obscure and dark,
We fight as Leibnitz did with Clarke ;
And when no reason we can show
Why matters this or that way go,
The shortest way the thing we try,
And what we know not, we deny :
True to our own o'erbearing pride,
And false to all the world beside.

' That old philosopher grew cross,
Who could not tell what motion was ;
Because he walk'd against his will,
He fac'd men down that he stood still.
And he who reading on the heart
(When all his *quodlibets* of art
Could not expound its pulse and heat)
Swore he had never felt it beat.
Chrysippus, foil'd by Epicurus,
Makes bold (Jove bless him!) to assure us,

That all things which our mind can view
May be at once both false and true.
And Malbranche has an odd conceit
As ever enter'd Frenchman's pate:
Says he, "So little can our mind
Of matter or of spirit find,
That we by guess, at least, may gather
Something which may be both or neither."
Faith, Dick, I must confess 'tis true
(But this is only *entre nous*)
That many knotty points there are
Which all discuss, but few can clear;
As Nature slyly had thought fit,
For some by-ends to cross-bite wit:
Circles to square, and cubes to double,
Would give a man excessive trouble:
The longitude uncertain roams,
In spite of Whiston and his bombs.
What system, Dick, has right averr'd
The cause why woman has no beard?
Or why, as years our frame attack,
Our hair grows white, our teeth grow black?
In points like these we must agree
Our barber knows as much as we:
Yet still unable to explain,
We must persist the best we can;
With care our systems still renew,
And prove things likely, though not true.
 'I could, thou see'st, in quaint dispute,
By dint of logic, strike thee mute;
With learned skill now push, now parry,
From Darii to Bocardo vary,
And never yield, or, what is worst,
Never conclude the point discours'd:

Yet that you, *hic et nunc*, may know
How much you to my candour owe,
I'll from the disputant descend,
'To show thee I assume the friend :
I'll take thy notion for my own—
(So most philosophers have done)
It makes my system more complete :
Dick, can it have a nobler fate ?'
' Take what thou wilt, (said Dick) dear friend,
But bring thy matters to an end.'

' I find, (quoth Mat) reproof is vain ;
Who first offend will first complain.
Thou wishest I should make to shore,
Yet still putt'st in thy thwarting oar.
What I have told thee fifty times
In prose, receive for once in rhymes.
A huge fat man in country-fair
Or city-church, (no matter where)
Labour'd and push'd amidst the crowd,
Still bawling out extremely loud,
" Lord save us ! why do people press !"
Another, marking his distress,
Friendly replied ; " Plump gentleman,
Get out as fast as e'er you can ;
Or cease to push or to exclaim ;
You make the very crowd you blame".'

Says Dick, ' Your moral does not need
The least return, so e'en proceed :
Your tale, howe'er applied, was short :
So far, at least, I thank you for't.'

Mat took his thanks, and in a tone
More magisterial thus went on :

' Now Alma settles in the head,
As has before been sung or said :

And here begins this farce of life ;
Enter Revenge, Ambition, Strife ;
Behold on both sides men advance,
To form in earnest Bays's dance.
L'Avare, not using half his store,
Still grumbles, that he has no more ;
Strikes not the present tun, for fear
The vintage should be bad next year,
And eats to-day with inward sorrow,
And dread of fancied want to-morrow.
Abroad if the surtout you wear
Repels the rigour of the air,
Would you be warmer, if at home
You had the fabric and the loom ?
And if two boots keep out the weather,
What need you have two hides of leather ?
Could Pedro, think you, make no trial
Of a sonata on his viol,
Unless he had the total gut
Whence every string at first was cut ?
 ' When Rarus shows you his Cartone,
He always tells you, with a groan,
Where two of that same hand were torn,
Long before you or he were born.
 ' Poor Vento's mind so much is cross'd,
For part of his Petronius lost,
That he can never take the pains
To understand what yet remains.
 ' What toil did honest Curio take,
What strict inquiries did he make,
To get one medal, wanting yet,
And perfect all his Roman set ?
'Tis found : and, O, his happy lot !
'Tis bought, lock'd up, and lies forgot :

Of these no more you hear him speak ;
He now begins upon the Greek.
These rang'd and show'd, shall in their turns
Remain obscure as in their urns.
My copper lamps at any rate,

For being true antique, I bought,
Yet wisely melted down my plate,
On modern models to be wrought :
And trifles I alike pursue,
Because they're old, because they're new.

' Dick, I have seen you with delight
For Georgy ⁴ make a paper kite,
And simple odes, too many, show ye
My servile complaisance to Chloe.
Parents and lovers are decreed
By Nature fools'—' That's brave indeed !
(Quoth Dick) such truths are worth receiving :'
Yet still Dick look'd as not believing.

' Now, Alma, to divines and prose
I leave thy frauds, and crimes, and woes,
Nor think to-night of thy ill-nature,
But of thy follies, idle creature,
The turns of thy uncertain wing,
And not the malice of thy sting.
Thy pride of being great and wise
I do but mention, to despise ;
I view with anger and disdain
How little gives thee joy or pain :
A print, a bronze, a flower, a root,
A shell, a butterfly, can do't :
Even a romance, a tune, a rhyme,
Help thee to pass the tedious time,

⁴ The son of Mr. Richard Shelton.

Which else would on thy hand remain ;
Though flown, it ne'er looks back again :
And cards are dealt, and chess-boards brought,
To ease the pain of coward thought :
Happy result of human wit !
That Alma may herself forget.

‘ Dick, thus we act, and thus we are,
Or toss'd by hope or sunk by care.
With endless pain this man pursues
What, if he gain'd, he could not use ;
And t' other fondly hopes to see
What never was, nor e'er shall be.
We err by use, go wrong by rules,
In gesture grave, in action fools :
We join hypocrisy to pride,
Doubling the faults we strive to hide.
Or grant that with extreme surprise
We find ourselves at sixty wise,
And twenty pretty things are known,
Of which we can't accomplish one ;
Whilst, as my system says, the Mind
Is to these upper rooms confin'd ;
Should I, my friend, at large repeat
Her borrow'd sense, her fond conceit,
The bead-roll of her vicious tricks,
My poem would be too prolix :
For could I my remarks sustain,
Like Socrates, or Miles Montaigne,
Who in these times would read my books,
But Tom o' Stiles or John o' Nokes ?

‘ As Brentford kings, discreet and wise,
After long thought and grave advice,
Into Lardella's coffin peeping,
Saw nought to cause their mirth or weeping ;

So Alma, now to joy or grief
Superior, finds her late relief;
Wearied of being high or great,
And nodding in her chair of state,
Stun'd and worn out with endless chat,
Of Will did this, and Nan said that,
She finds, poor thing, some little crack,
Which Nature forc'd by time must make,
Through which she wings her destin'd way;
Upward she soars, and down drops clay;
While some surviving friend supplies
Hic jacet, and a hundred lies.

' O Richard, till that day appears
Which must decide our hopes and fears,
Would Fortune calm her present rage,
And give us playthings for our age;
Would Clotho wash her hands in milk,
And twist our thread with gold and silk;
Would she in friendship, peace, and plenty,
Spin out our years to four times twenty;
And should we both in this condition,
Have conquer'd love, and worse ambition;
(Else those two passions, by the way,
May chance to show us scurvy play)
Then, Richard, then should we sit down,
Far from the tumult of this Town;
I, fond of my well-chosen seat,
My pictures, medals, books complete;
Or, should we mix our friendly talk,
O'ershaded in that favourite walk
Which thy own hand had whilom planted,
Both pleas'd with all we thought we wanted;
Yet then, ev'n then, one cross reflection
Would spoil thy grove and my collection:

Thy son and his ere that may die,
And time some unconth heir supply,
Who shall for nothing else be known,
But spoiling all that thou hast done.
Who set the twigs, shall he remember
That is in haste to sell the timber?
And what shall of thy woods remain,
Except the box that threw the main?

‘ Nay, may not time and death remove
The near relations whom I love?
And my Coz Tom, or his Coz Mary,
(Who hold the plough or skim the dairy)
My favourite books and pictures sell
To Smart, or Doiley, by the ell?
Kindly throw in a little figure,
And set their price upon the bigger?
Those who could never read their grammar,
When my dear volumes touch the hammer,
May think books best as richest bound :
My copper medals by the pound
May be with learned justice weigh’d ;
To turn the balance, Otho’s head
May be thrown in ; and, for the mettle,
The coin may mend a tinker’s kettle——
Tir’d with these thoughts’—‘ Less tir’d than I,
(Quoth Dick) with your philosophy—
That people live and die, I knew
An hour ago as well as you ;
And if fate spins us longer years,
Or is in haste to take the shears,
I know we must both fortunes try,
And bear our evils wet or dry.
Yet let the goddess smile or frown,
Bread we shall eat, or white or brown,

And in a cottage or a court
Drink fine champagne or muddled port.
What need of books these truths to tell,
Which folks perceive who cannot spell?
And must we spectacles apply
To view what hurts our naked eye?
‘ Sir, if it be your wisdom’s aim,
To make me merrier than I am,
I’ll be all night at your devotion——
Come on, friend ; broach the pleasing notion ;
But if you would depress my thought,
Your System is not worth a groat——
‘ For Plato’s fancies what care I?
I hope you would not have me die,
Like simple Cato in the play,
For any thing that he can say?
E’en let him of ideas speak
To heathens in his native Greek :
If to be sad is to be wise,
I do most heartily despise
Whatever Socrates has said,
Or Tully writ, or Wanley⁵ read.
‘ Dear Drift⁶, to set our matters right,
Remove these papers from my sight ;
Burn Mat’s Descartes and Aristotle :—
Here, Jonathan, your master’s bottle.’

⁵ Humphrey Wanley, the learned librarian to Lord Oxford.

⁶ Adrian Drift, Esq. Mr. Prior’s secretary and executor.

THE
NUT-BROWN MAID¹.

A POEM.

WRITTEN THREE HUNDRED YEARS SINCE.

BE it right or wrong, these men among
On women do complayne ;
Affyrmynge this, how that it is
A labour spent in vaine,
To love them wele ; for never a dele
They love a man againe :
For lete a man do what he can,
Theyr favour to attayne ;
Yet, yf a new do them pursue,
Theyr furst trew lover than
Laboureth for nought ; for from her thought
He is a banishyd man.

¹ Originally printed, without any denotation of its author, in a folio volume commonly called 'Arnold's Chronicle, or the Customs of London ;' which Mr. Capell supposes to have appeared about 1521, and Mr. Herbert some years earlier. In the *Muses' Mercury* for June 1707, it was conjectured to be near three hundred years old, and probably on that authority Prior confided ; as Dr. Percy seems to conclude, it had the sanction of the learned Wanley. The persons represented are surmised to be the Earl of Westmorland's son, and a lady of equal quality.

I say not nay, but that all day
It is bothe writ and sayde,
That woman's fayth is, as who saythe,
All ntterly decayed:
But, nevertheless, right good wytness
In this case might be layde,
That they love trewe, and continew;
Record the Nut-brown Mayde;
Which from her love (when her to prove
He came to make his mone)
Wold not depart, for in her hart
She loved but hym alone.

Than betweene us, lett us discusse,
What was all the manere
Between them too: we wyl also
Telle all the payne and fere,
That she was in. Now I begyn,
So that ye me answeare:
Wherefore all ye, that present be,
I pray ye give an eare.
MAN. I am the knyght; I come by nyght
As secret as I can,
Saying, alas! thus standeth the case,
I am a banishyd man.

WOM. And I your wylle for to fulfyll
In this wyl not refuse;
Trusting to shewe, in wordis fewe,
That men have au yll use,
(To theyr own shame) women to blame,
And causelese them accuse;
Therefore to you I answeare now,
Alle women to excuse:—

Myn own hart dere, with you what chere?
I pray you, telle anone;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. It stondeth so; a dede is do,
Whereof grete harm shall growe;
My desteny is for to dye
A shamefull deth, I trowe
Or elles to flee: the one must be,
None other way I knowe,
But to withdrawe, as an outlawe,
And take me to my bowe.
Wherefore adew, my owne hart trewe,
None other rede I can;
For I must to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. O Lord! what is this worldis blysse,
That chaungeth as the mone?
My somer's day, in lusty May,
Is derked before the none.
I here you saye, farewell: nay, nay,
We depart not so sone.
Why say ye so? wheder wyll ye goe?
Alas! what have ye done?
Alle my welfare to sorrowe and care
Shulde chaunge, yf ye were gone;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. I can beleve, it shall you greeve,
And somewhat you distrayne,
But afterwarde, your paynes harde,
Within a day or tweyne,

Shall sone aslake ; and ye shall take
Comfort to you agayne.
Why shuld ye nought ? for, to make thought
Your labour were in vayne ;
And thus I do, and pray you too,
As hertely as I can ;
For I muste to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Now, syth that ye have shewed to me
The secret of your mynde,
I shall be plaine to you againe,
Lyke as ye shall me fynde.
Syth it is so, that ye wyl goe,
I woll not leve behynde :
Shall never be sayd the Nut-brown Mayd
Was to her love unkynde.
Make you redy, for so am I,
Although it were anone ;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Yet I you rede to take good hede
What men wyll thinke, and say ;
Of yonge and olde, it shall be tolde,
That ye be gone away :
Your wanton wyll for to fulfyll,
In grene wode you to play ;
And that ye myght from your dellyght
No lenger make delay.
Rather than ye shuld thus for me
Be call'd an yll woman,
Yet wold I to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Though it be songe of old and yonge,
That I shuld be to blame,
Theyrs be the charge, that speke so large
In hurtinge of my name :
For I wyll prove; that faythfull love
It is devoyd of shame;
In your distress, and hevyness,
To parte wyth you, the same :
And sure all tho, that do not so,
Trewe lovers are they none;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. I counceyle you, remember howe,
It is no mayden's lawe,
Nothing to dout, but to renne out
To wode with an outlawe :
For ye must there in your hand bere
A bowe, redy to drawe;
And, as a theef, thus must ye lyve,
Ever in drede and awe.
Wherby to you grete harme myght growe;
Yet I had lever than
That I had to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. I think not nay; but as ye say,
It is no mayden's lore;
But love may make me for your sake,
As I have said before,
To come on fote, to hunt and shote,
To gete us mete in store;
For so that I your company
May have, I aske no more :

From whiche to part, it makith my heart
As colde as ony stone ;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. For an outlawe, this is the lawe,
That men hym take and binde,
Wythout pytee, hanged to be,
And waver with the wynde.
Yf I had neede, as God forbede,
What socours coude ye finde?
Forsoth, I trowe, ye and your bowe
Shuld drawe for fere behynde.
And no mervayle; for lytell awayle
Were in your counceyle than :
Wherefore I wyll to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Full well knowe ye, that women be
But feble for to fyght :
No womanhede it is inded,
To be bold as a knyght :
Yet in suche fere yf that ye were
With enemyes day or nyght,
I wolde withstaunde, wyth bowe in hande,
To greve them as I myght ;
And you to save, as women have
From dethe many one ;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Yet take good hede ! for ever I drede
That ye coude not sustayne
The thornie wayes, the depe valeis,
The snowe, the frost, the rayne ;

The colde, the hete : for drye, or wete,
We must lodge on the playne,
And us above, none other rofe,
But a brake bush, or twayne;
Whiche sone shulde greve yon, I beleve;
And ye wolde gladely than,
That I had to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Sythe I have here been partynere
With you of joy and blysse,
I must also parte of your wo
Endure, as reson is :
Yet am I sure of one plesure,
And, shortely, it is this,
That where ye be, me seemeth, par-dy
I conde not fare amysse.
Without more speche, I you beseche
That we were sone a-gone ;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Yf ye go thedyr, ye must consyder,
When ye have lust to dyne,
Ther shall no mete be for to gete,
Nor drink, berc, ale, ne wyne ;
Ne shetes clene, to lye betwene,
Made of threde and twyne ;
None other house, but leves and bowes,
To kever your head and myne.
O myne hart swete, this evyll dyete
Shuld make you pale and wan ;
Wherefore I wyll to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Among the wylde dere, such an archere
As men say that ye be,
We may not fayle of good vitayle,
Where is so grete plentè :
And water clere of the ryvere
Shall be full swete to me,
With whiche in hele, I shal ryght wele
Endure, as ye shall see ;
And, or we go, a bed or two
I can provyde anone ;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Lo! yet before, ye must do more,
Yf ye wyll go with me ;
As cut your here up by your ere,
Your kyrtel by the knee :
Wyth bowe in hande, for to withstande
Your enemyes, yf nede be ;
And this same nyght, before day-lyght,
To wode-warde wyll I flee.
And yf ye wyll all this fulfyllen,
Do it shortely as ye can ;
Els wyll I to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. I shall as nowe do more for you
Than longeth to womanhede ;
To short my here, a bow to bere,
To shote in tyme of nede.
O my sweete mother, before all other,
For you have I most drede ;
But now, adue, I must ensue,
Where fortune doth me lede.

All this make ye ; now let us flee,
The day cometh fast upon ;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Nay, nay, not so ; ye shall not go,
And I shall tell ye why ;—
Your appetyte is to be lyght
Of love, I wele espie ;
For lyke as ye have sayde to me,
In lykewyse hardely
Ye wolde answer, whosoever it were,
In way of company.
It is sayd of olde, ‘ Sone hote, sone colde,’
And so is a woman ;
Wherefore I to the wode wyll go,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Yf ye take hede, yt is no nede
Such wordes to say by me ;
For oft ye prayd, and longe assayd,
Or I you loved par-dy ;
And though that I of auncestry
A baron's daughter be,
Yet have you proved howe I you loved,
A squyer of low degree ;
And ever shall what so befall,
To dy therefore anone ;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. A baron's chylde to be begylde,
It were a cursed dede :
To be felawe with an outlawe,
Almighty God forbede !

Yt better were, the pore squyere
Alone to forrest spede,
Than ye sholde say another day,
That, by my cursed dede,
Ye were betrayd. Wherefore, good mayd,
The best rede that I can,
Is, that I to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Whatever befall, I never shall
Of this thyng you upbrayd ;
But yf ye go, and leve me so,
Then have ye me betrayd.
Remember ye wele, howe that ye dele ;
For, yf ye, as ye sayd,
Be so unkynde, to leve behynde
Your love, the Nut-browne Mayd,
Trust me truely, that I shall dy
Sone after ye be gone ;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Yf that ye went, ye shulde repent ;
For in the forrest nowe
I have purveid me of a mayde,
Whom I love more than you :
Another fayrere, than ever ye were,
I dare it well avowe ;
And of you bothe eche shulde be wrothe
Wyth other, as I trowe ;
It were myne ese, to live in pese,
So wyll I, yf I can :
Wherefore I to the wode wyll go,
Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Though in the wode I undirstode
Ye had a paramour,
All this may nought remove my thought,
But that I wyll be your :
And she shall fynde me soft and kynde,
And curteis every hour ;
Glad to fulfyll all that she wyll
Commaunde me to my power.
For had ye, lo, an hundred mo,
Yet wolde I be that one ;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Myne own dere love, I see the prove,
That ye be kynde and trewe ;
Of mayde and wyfe, in all my lyfe,
The best that ever I knewe.
Be mery and glad, be no more sad,
The case is chaunged newe ;
For it were ruthe, that for your truthe,
Ye shulde have cause to rewe.
Be not dismayd ; whatsoever I sayd
To you, whan I began ;
I wyll not to the grene wode goe,
I am no banishyd man.

WOM. These tydings be more glad to me,
Than to be made a quene,
Yf I were sure they shulde endure ;
But it is often seene,
When men wyll breke promyse, they speke
The wordes on the splene :
Ye shape some wyle, me to begyle,
And stele from me I wene.

Then were the case worse than it was,
And I more wo-begone :
For in my mynde, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Ye shall not nede further to drede ;
I wyll not disparage
You, (God defend!) syth you descend
Of so grete a lynage.
Nowe undyrstande, to Westmarlande,
Whiche is myne herytage,
I wyll you brynge, and wyth a ryng,
By way of maryage,
I wyll you take, and lady make,
As shortely as I can :
Thus have you won an erlyes son,
And not a banishyd man.

HENRY AND EMMA.

A POEM,

UPON THE MODEL OF

THE NUT-BROWN MAID.

TO CHLOE.

THOU, to whose eyes I bend, at whose command
(Though low my voice, though artless be my hand)
I take the sprightly reed, and sing and play,
Careless of what the censuring world may say;
Bright Chloe! object of my constant vow,
Wilt thou a while unbend thy serious brow?
Wilt thou with pleasure hear thy lover's strains,
And with one heavenly smile o'erpay his pains?
No longer shall the Nut-brown Maid be old,
Though since her youth three hundred years have
At thy desire she shall again be rais'd, [roll'd:
And her reviving charms in lasting verse be prais'd.

No longer man of woman shall complain,
That he may love and not be lov'd again;
That we in vain the fickle sex pursue,
Who change the constant lover for the new.
Whatever has been writ, whatever said
Of female passion feign'd, or faith decay'd,
Henceforth shall in my verse refuted stand,
Be said to winds, or writ upon the sand:

And while my notes to future times proclaim
 Unconquer'd love and ever-during flame,
 O, fairest of the sex! be thou my Muse;
 Deign on my work thy influence to diffuse :
 Let me partake the blessings I rehearse,
 And grant me Love, the just reward of verse.

As Beauty's potent queen with every grace
 That once was Emma's, has adorn'd thy face,
 And as her son has to my bosom dealt
 That constant flame which faithful Henry felt;
 O let the story with thy life agree,
 Let men once more the bright example see ;
 What Emma was to him, be thou to me :
 Nor send me by thy frown from her I love,
 Distant and sad, a banish'd man to rove :
 But, oh! with pity, long entreated, crown [one }
 My pains and hopes ; and when thou say'st that }
 Of all mankind thou lov'st, oh! think on me alone. }

WHERE beauteous Isis and her husband Thame
 With mingled waves for ever flow the same,
 In times of yore an ancient baron liv'd,
 Great gifts bestow'd and great respect receiv'd.

When dreadful Edward with successful care
 Led his free Britons to the Gallic war,
 This lord had headed his appointed bands,
 In firm allegiance to his king's commands,
 And (all due honours faithfully discharg'd)
 Had brought back his paternal coat, enlarg'd
 With a new mark, the witness of his toil,
 And no inglorious part of foreign spoil.

From the loud camp retir'd, and noisy court,
 In honourable ease and rural sport
 The remnant of his days he safely past,
 Nor found they lag'd too slow, nor flew too fast ;

He made his wish with his estate comply,
Joyful to live, yet not afraid to die.

One child he had, a daughter, chaste and fair,
His age's comfort and his fortune's heir :

They call'd her Emma, for the beauteous dame
Who gave the virgin birth had borne the name ;

The name the indulgent father doubly lov'd ;

For in the child the mother's charms improv'd :

Yet as, when little, round his knees she play'd,

He call'd her oft, in sport, his Nut-brown Maid ;

The friends and tenants took the fondling word,
(As still they please who imitate their lord)

Usage confirm'd what fancy had begun ;

The mutual terms around the lands were known, }
And Emma and the Nut-brown Maid were one. }

As with her stature still her charms increas'd,

Through all the isle her beauty was confess'd.
Oh! what perfections must that virgin share,

Who fairest is esteem'd where all are fair ?
From distant shires repair the noble youth,

And find report for once had lessen'd truth.

By wonder first, and then by passion mov'd,

They came; they saw; they marvell'd; and they
By public praises and by secret sighs [lov'd.

Each own'd the general power of Emma's eyes.

In tilts and tournaments the valiant strove,

By glorions deeds, to purchase Emma's love.

In gentle verse the witty told their flame,

And grac'd their choicest songs with Emma's name.

In vain they combated, in vain they writ,

Useless their strength, and impotent their wit :

Great Venus only must direct the dart,

Which else will never reach the fair one's heart, }
Spite of the attempts of force and soft effects of }

art.

Great Venus must prefer the happy one;
In Henry's cause her favour must be shown,
And Emma, of mankind, must love but him alone. }

While these in public to the castle came,
And by their grandeur justified their flame,
More secret ways the careful Henry takes;
His 'squires, his arms, and equipage forsakes.
In borrow'd name and false attire array'd,
Oft he finds means to see the beauteous maid.

When Emma hunts, in huntsman's habit dress'd,
Henry on foot pursues the bounding beast;
In his right hand his beachen pole he bears,
And graceful at his side his horn he wears.
Still to the glade where she has bent her way,
With knowing skill he drives the future prey;
Bids her decline the hill and shun the brake,
And shows the path her steed may safest take ;
Directs her spear to fix the glorious wound,
Pleas'd in his toils to have her triumph crown'd, }
And blows her praises in no common sound.

A falconer Henry is when Emma hawks ;
With her of tarsels and of lures he talks :
Upon his wrist the towering merlin stands,
Practis'd to rise and stoop at her commands :
And when superior now the bird has flown,
And headlong brought the tumbling quarry down,
With humble reverence he accosts the fair,
And with the honour'd feather decks her hair.
Yet still as from the sportive field she goes,
His downcast eye reveals his inward woes ;
And by his look and sorrow is express'd
A nobler game pursued than bird or beast.

A shepherd now along the plain he roves,
And with his jolly pipe delights the groves.

The neighbouring swains around the stranger
Or to admire or emulate his song ; [throng,
While with soft sorrow he renews his lays,
Nor heedful of their envy nor their praise :
But soon as Emma's eyes adorn the plain,
His notes he raises to a nobler strain,
With dutiful respect and studious fear,
Lest any careless sound offend her ear.

A frantic gipsy now the house he haunts,
And in wild phrases speaks dissembled wants,
With the fond maids in palmistry he deals :
They tell the secret first, which he reveals ;
Says who shall wed, and who shall be beguil'd ;
What groom shall get, and 'squire maintain the child :
But when bright Emma would her fortune know,
A softer look unbends his opening brow :
With trembling awe he gazes on her eye,
And in soft accents forms the kind reply,
That she shall prove as fortunate as fair,
And Hymen's choicest gifts are all reserv'd for her.

Now oft had Henry chang'd his sly disguise,
Unmark'd by all but beauteous Emma's eyes :
Oft had found means alone to see the dame,
And at her feet to breathe his amorous flame ;
And oft the pangs of absence to remove
By letters, soft interpreters of love ;
Till time and industry (the mighty two
That bring our wishes nearer to our view)
Made him perceive, that the inclining fair
Receiv'd his vows with no reluctant ear ;
That Venus had confirm'd her equal reign,
And dealt to Emma's heart a share of Henry's pain.

While Cupid smil'd, by kind occasion bless'd,
And with the secret kept the love increas'd,

The amorous youth frequents the silent groves,
 And much he meditates, for much he loves.
 He loves, 'tis true, and is belov'd again ;
 Great are his joys ; but will they long remain ?
 Emma with smiles receives his present flame,
 But, smiling, will she ever be the same ?
 Beautiful looks are rul'd by fickle minds,
 And summer seas are turn'd by sudden winds :
 Another love may gain her easy youth ;
 Time changes thought, and flattery conquers truth.

O impotent estate of human life !

Where hope and fear maintain eternal strife ;
 Where fleeting joy does lasting doubt inspire,
 And most we question what we most desire.
 Amongst thy various gifts, great Heaven, bestow
 Our cup of love unmix'd ; forbear to throw
 Bitter ingredients in, nor pall the draught
 With nauseous grief ; for our ill-judging thought
 Hardly enjoys the pleasurable taste,
 Or deems it not sincere, or fears it cannot last.

With wishes rais'd, with jealousies oppress'd,
 (Alternate tyrants of the human breast)

By one great trial he resolves to prove
 The faith of woman, and the force of love :
 If, scanning Emma's virtues, he may find
 That beauteous frame inclose a steady mind,
 He'll fix his hope, of future joy secure,
 And live a slave to Hymen's happy power :
 But if the fair one, as he fears, is frail ;
 If pois'd aright in reason's equal scale,
 Light fly her merits, and her faults prevail,
 His mind he vows to free from amorous care,
 The latent mischief from his heart to tear,
 Resume his azure arms, and shine again in war.

South of the castle, in a verdant glade,
A spreading beech extends her friendly shade ;
Here oft the nymph his breathing vows had heard ;
Here oft her silence had her heart declar'd.
As active Spring awak'd her infant buds,
And genial life inform'd the verdant woods,
Henry, in knots involving Emma's name,
Had half express'd and half conceal'd his flame
Upon this tree ; and as the tender mark
Grew with the year, and widen'd with the bark,
Venus had heard the virgin's soft address,
That, as the wound, the passion might increase.
As potent Nature shed her kindly showers,
And deck'd the various mead with opening flowers,
Upon this tree the nymph's obliging care
Had left a frequent wreath for Henry's hair,
Which as with gay delight the lover found,
Pleas'd with his conquest, with her present crown'd,
Glorious through all the plains he oft had gone, }
And to each swain the mystic honour shown, }
The gift still prais'd, the giver still unknown.

His secret note the troubled Henry writes ;
To the known tree the lovely maid invites :
Imperfect words and dubious terms express
That unforeseen mischance disturb'd his peace ;
That he must something to her ear commend,
On which her conduct and his life depend.

Soon as the fair one had the note receiv'd,
The remnant of the day, alone, she griev'd ;
For different this from every former note
Which Venus dictated and Henry wrote ;
Which told her all his future hopes were laid
On the dear bosom of his Nut-brown Maid ;

Which always bless'd her eyes, and own'd her power,
And bid her oft adieu, yet added more.

Now night advanc'd: the house in sleep were
laid,

The nurse experienc'd, and the prying maid;
And, last, that sprite which does incessant haunt
The lover's steps, the ancient maiden aunt,
To her dear Henry Emma wings her way,
With quicken'd pace repairing forc'd delay:
For Love, fantastic power, that is afraid
To stir abroad till Watchfulness be laid,
Undaunted then o'er cliffs and vallies strays,
And leads his votaries safe through pathless ways.
Not Argus with his hundred eyes shall find
Where Cupid goes, though he, poor guide, is blind.

The maiden first arriving, sent her eye
To ask if yet its chief delight were nigh:
With fear and with desire, with joy and pain
She sees, and runs to meet him on the plain;
But, oh! his steps proclaim no lover's haste;
On the low ground his fix'd regards are cast;
His artful bosom heaves dissembled sighs,
And tears, suborn'd, fall copious from his eyes.

With ease, alas! we credit what we love;
His painted grief does real sorrow move
In the afflicted fair: adown her cheek
Trickling the genuine tears their current break:
Attentive stood the mournful nymph: the man
Broke silence first: the tale alternate ran.

HEN. Sincere, O tell me, hast thou felt a pain,
Emma, beyond what woman knows to feign?
Has thy uncertain bosom ever strove
With the first tumults of a real love?

Hast thou now dreaded and now bless'd his sway,
 By turns averse and joyful to obey?
 Thy virgin softness hast thou e'er bewail'd,
 As reason yielded, and as love prevail'd?
 And wept the potent god's resistless dart,
 His killing pleasure, his ecstatic smart,
 And heavenly poison thrilling through thy heart? }
 If so, with pity view my wretched state,
 At least deplore, and then forget my fate :
 To some more happy knight reserve thy charms,
 By Fortune favour'd and successful arms ;
 And only as the sun's revolving ray
 Brings back each year this melancholy day,
 Permit one sigh, and set apart one tear
 To an abandon'd exile's endless care.
 For me, alas! outcast of human race,
 Love's anger only waits, and dire disgrace ;
 For, lo ! these hands in murder are imbruéd,
 These trembling feet by Justice are pursuéd :
 Fate calls aloud, and hastens me away ;
 A shameful death attends my longer stay ;
 And I this night must fly from thee and love,
 Condemn'd in lonely woods a banish'd man to rove.

EMMA. What is our bliss that changeth with the
 And day of life that darkens ere 'tis noon ? [moon,
 What is true passion, if unblest it dies ?
 And where is Emma's joy, if Henry flies?
 If love, alas! be pain, the pain I bear
 No thought can figure, and no tongue declare.
 Ne'er faithful woman felt, nor false one feign'd
 The flames which long have in my bosom reign'd :
 The god of Love himself inhabits there,
 With all his rage, and dread, and grief, and care, }
 His complement of stores and total war.

O! cease then coldly to suspect my love,
And let my deed at least my faith approve.
Alas! no youth shall my endearments share,
Nor day nor night shall interrupt my care ;
No future story shall with truth upbraid
The cold indifference of the Nut-brown Maid ;
Nor to hard banishment shall Henry run,
While careless Emma sleeps on beds of down.
View me resolv'd, where'er thou lead'st, to go,
Friend to thy pain, and partner of thy woe ;
For I attest fair Venus and her son,
That I, of all mankind, will love but thee alone.

HEN. Let prudence yet obstruct thy ventrous way,
And take good heed what men will think and say ;
That beauteous Emma vagrant courses took,
Her father's house and civil life forsook ;
That full of youthful blood, and fond of man,
She to the woodland with an exile ran.
Reflect, that lessen'd fame is ne'er regain'd,
And virgin-honour once, is always, stain'd :
Timely advis'd, the coming evil shun ;
Better not do the deed, than weep it done :
No penance can absolve our guilty fame,
Nor tears, that wash out sin, can wash out shame :
Then fly the sad effects of desperate love, [rove.
And leave a banish'd man through lonely woods to

EMMA. Let Emma's hapless case be falsely told
By the rash young or the ill-natur'd old ;
Let every tongue its various censures choose,
Absolve with coldness, or with spite accuse ;
Fair Truth at last her radiant beams will raise,
And Malice, vanquish'd, heightens Virtue's praise.
Let then thy favour but indulge my flight,
O! let my presence make thy travels light,

And potent Venus shall exalt my name,
Above the rumours of censorious Fame ;
Nor from that busy demon's restless power
Will ever Emma other grace implore,
Than that this truth should to the world be known,
That I, of all mankind, have lov'd but thee alone.

HEN. But can'st thou wield the sword, and bend
With active force repel the sturdy foe? [the bow ?
When the loud tumult speaks the battle nigh,
And winged deaths in whistling arrows fly,
Wilt thou, though wounded, yet undaunted stay,
Perform thy part, and share the dangerous day ?
Then, as thy strength decays, thy heart will fail ;
Thy limbs all trembling and thy cheeks all pale,
With fruitless sorrow thou, inglorious maid,
Wilt weep thy safety, by thy love betray'd ;
Then to thy friend, by foes o'ercharg'd, deny
Thy little useless aid, and coward fly ;
Then wilt thou curse the chance that made thee love
A banish'd man, condemn'd in lonely woods to rove.

EMMA. With fatal certainty Thalestris knew
To send the arrow from the twanging yew :
And great in arms, and foremost in the war,
Bouduca, brandish'd high the British spear :
Could thirst of vengeance and desire of fame
Excite the female breast with martial flame ?
And shall not Love's diviner power inspire
More hardy virtue and more generous fire ?

Near thee, mistrust not, constant I'll abide,
And fall or vanquish, fighting by thy side.
Though my inferior strength may not allow
That I should bear or draw the warrior bow,
With ready hand I will the shaft supply,
And joy to see thy victor-arrows fly.

Touch'd in the battle by the hostile reed,
Shouldst thou (but Heaven avert it!) shouldst thou
To stop the wounds my finest lawn I'd tear, [bleed,
Wash them with tears, and wipe them with my hair;
Bless'd when my dangers and my toils have shown
That I, of all mankind, could love but thee alone.

HEN. But can'st thou, tender Maid, can'st thou
Afflictive want, or hunger's pressing pain? [sustain
Those limbs, in lawn and softest silk array'd,
From sunbeams guarded, and of winds afraid,
Can they bear angry Jove? can they resist
The parching Dog-star and the bleak North-east?
When, chill'd by adverse snows and beating rain,
We tread with weary steps the longsome plain;
When with hard toil we seek our evening food,
Berries and acorns, from the neighbouring wood,
And find among the cliffs no other house
But the thin covert of some gather'd boughs,
Wilt thou not then reluctant send thine eye
Around the dreary waste, and weeping try
(Though then, alas! that trial be too late)
To find thy father's hospitable gate,
And seats where Ease and Plenty brooding sate? }
Those seats whence, long excluded, thou must
mourn;

That gate for ever barr'd to thy return;
Wilt thou not then bewail ill-fated love, [rove?
And hate a banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to

EMMA. Thy rise of fortune did I only wed,
From its decline determin'd to recede;
Did I but purpose to embark with thee
On the smooth surface of a summer's sea,
While gentle zephyrs play in prosperous gales,
And Fortune's favour fills the swelling sails,

But would forsake the ship and make the shore,
When the winds whistle and the tempests roar?

No, Henry, no: one sacred oath has tied
Our loves; one destiny our life shall guide,
Nor wild, nor deep, our common way divide. }

When from the cave thou risest with the day,
To beat the woods and rouse the bounding prey,
The cave with moss and branches I'll adorn,
And cheerful sit to wait my lord's return:
And when thou frequent bring'st the smitten deer,
(For seldom, archers say, thy arrows err)
I'll fetch quick fuel from the neighbouring wood,
And strike the sparkling flint, and dress the food:
With humble duty and officious haste
I'll cull the furthest mead for thy repast;
The choicest herbs I to thy board will bring,
And draw thy water from the freshest spring:
And when at night, with weary toil oppress'd,
Soft slumbers thou enjoy'st and wholesome rest,
Watchful I'll guard thee, and with midnight prayer
Weary the gods to keep thee in their care;
And joyous ask, at morn's returning ray,
If thou hast health, and I may bless the day.
My thoughts shall fix, my latest wish depend
On thee, guide, guardian, kinsman, father, friend:
By all these sacred names be Henry known
To Emma's heart; and, grateful, let him own
That she, of all mankind, could love but him alone. }

HEN. Vainly thou tell'st me what the woman's
Shall in the wildness of the wood prepare: [care
Thou, ere thou goest, unhappiest of thy kind,
Must leave the habit and the sex behind.
No longer shall thy comely tresses break
In flowing ringlets on thy snowy neck,

Or sit behind thy head, an ample round,
In graceful breeds, with various ribbon bound ;
No longer shall the bodice, aptly lac'd
From thy full bosom to thy slender waist,
That air and harmony of shape express,
Fine by degrees, and beautifully less ;
Nor shall thy lower garments' artful plait,
From thy fair side dependent to thy feet,
Arm their chaste beauties with a modest pride,
And double every charm they seek to hide.
The' ambrosial plenty of thy shining hair
Cropt off and lost, scarce lower than thy ear
Shall stand uncouth ; a horseman's coat shall hide
Thy taper shape, and comeliness of side ;
The short trunk-hose shall show thy foot and knee
Licentious, and to common eyesight free ;
And with a bolder stride and looser air,
Mingled with men, a man thou must appear.

Nor solitude, nor gentle peace of mind,
Mistaken maid, shalt thou in forests find :
'Tis long since Cynthia and her train were there,
Or guardian gods made innocence their care :
Vagrants and outlaws shall offend thy view,
For such must be my friends ; a hideous crew,
By adverse fortune mix'd in social ill,
Train'd to assault, and disciplin'd to kill ;
Their common loves a lewd abandon'd pack,
The beadle's lash still flagrant on their back ;
By sloth corrupted, by disorder fed,
Made bold by want, and prostitute for bread :
With such must Emma hunt the tedious day,
Assist their violence and divide their prey ;
With such she must return at setting light,
Though not partaker, witness of their night.

Thy ear, inur'd to charitable sounds
 And pitying love, must feel the hateful wounds
 Of jest obscene and vulgar ribaldry,
 The ill-bred question and the lewd reply ;
 Brought by long habitude from bad to worse,
 Must hear the frequent oath, the direful curse,
 That latest weapon of the wretches' war,
 And blasphemy, sad comrade of despair.

Now. Emma, now the last reflection make,
 What thou would'st follow, what thou must forsake :
 By our ill-omen'd stars and adverse heaven,
 No middle object to thy choice is given :
 Or yield thy virtue to attain thy love,
 Or leave a banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to
 rove.

EMMA. O grief of heart ! that our unhappy fates
 Force thee to suffer what thy honour hates ;
 Mix thee amongst the bad, or make thee run
 Too near the paths which Virtue bids thee shun.
 Yet with her Henry still let Emma go ;
 With him abhor the vice, but share the woe :
 And sure my little heart can never err
 Amidst the worst, if Henry still be there.

Our outward act is prompted from within,
 And from the sinner's mind proceeds the sin :
 By her own choice free Virtue is approv'd,
 Nor by the force of outward objects mov'd ;
 Who has assay'd no danger, gains no praise :
 In a small isle, amidst the widest seas,
 Triumphant Constancy has fix'd her seat ;
 In vain the syrens sing, the tempests beat :
 Their flattery she rejects, nor fears their threat. }

For thee alone these little charms I dress'd,
 Condemn'd them, or absolv'd them, by thy test :

In comely figure rang'd, my jewels shone,
 Or negligently plac'd, for thee alone :
 For thee again they shall be laid aside ;
 'The woman, Henry, shall put off her pride
 For thee : my clothes, my sex, exchange'd for thee, }
 I'll mingle with the people's wretched lee ; }
 O line extreme of human infamy !
 Wanting the scissars, with these hands I'll tear
 (If that obstructs my flight) this load of hair :
 Black soot or yellow walnut shall disgrace
 This little red and white of Emma's face :
 'These nails with scratches shall deform my breast, }
 Lest by my look or colour be express'd [dress'd. }
 The mark of aught high-born, or ever better }
 Yet in this commerce, under this disguise,
 Let me be grateful still to Henry's eyes ;
 Lost to the world, let me to him be known ; }
 My fate I can absolve, if he shall own }
 That, leaving all mankind, I love but him alone. }

HEN. O wildest thought of an abandon'd mind !
 Name, habit, parents, woman, left behind,
 Even honour dubious, thou prefer'st to go
 Wild to the woods with me. Said Emma so ?
 Or did I dream what Emma never said ?
 O guilty error ! and O wretched maid !
 Whose roving fancy would resolve the same }
 With him who next should tempt her easy fame, }
 And blow with empty words the susceptible flame. }
 Now why should doubtful terms thy mind perplex ?
 Confess thy frailty, and avow thy sex :
 No longer loose desire for constant love [rove.
 Mistake, but say, 'tis man with whom thou long'st to

EMMA. Are there not poisons, racks, and flames,
 and swords,
 That Emma thus must die by Henry's words ?

Yet what could swords or poison, racks or flame,
But mangle and disjoint this brittle frame !
More fatal Henry's words, they murder Emma's
fame.

And fall these sayings from that gentle tongue,
Where civil speech and soft persuasion hung?
Whose artful sweetness and harmonious strain,
Courting my grace, yet courting it in vain,
Call'd sighs, and tears, and wishes, to its aid,
And, whilst it Henry's glowing flame convey'd,
Still blam'd the coldness of the Nut-brown Maid?

Let envious Jealousy and canker'd Spite
Produce my actions to severest light,
And tax my open day or secret night.
Did e'er my tongue speak my unguarded heart
The least inclin'd to play the wanton's part?
Did e'er my eye one inward thought reveal,
Which angels might not hear, and virgins tell?
And hast thou, Henry, in my conduct known
One fault, but that which I must ever own,
That I, of all mankind, have lov'd but thee alone?

HEN. Vainly thou talk'st of loving me alone ;
Each man is man, and all our sex is one :
False are our words, and fickle is our mind ;
Nor in Love's ritual can we ever find
Vows made to last, or promises to bind.

By Nature prompted, and for empire made,
Alike by strength or cunning we invade :
When arm'd with rage we march against the foe,
We lift the battle-axe and draw the bow ;
When fir'd with passion, we attack the fair,
Delusive sighs and brittle vows we bear ;
Our falsehood and our arms have equal use,
As they our conquest or delight produce.

The foolish heart thou gav'st, again receive,
 The only boon departing Love can give.
 To be less wretched, be no longer true ;
 What strives to fly thee, why shouldst thou pur-
 Forget the present flame, indulge a new : [sue?
 Single the loveliest of the amorous youth ;
 Ask for his vow, but hope not for his truth.
 The next man (and the next thou shalt believe)
 Will pawn his gods, intending to deceive ;
 Will kneel, implore, persist, o'ercome, and leave.
 Hence let thy Cupid aim his arrows right ;
 Be wise and false, shun trouble, seek delight ;
 Change thou the first, nor wait thy lover's flight.

' Why shouldst thou weep? let Nature judge our
 case ;

I saw thee young and fair ; pursued the chase
 Of youth and beauty : I another saw
 Fairer and younger : yielding to the law
 Of our all-ruling mother, I pursued
 More youth, more beauty, Bless'd vicissitude !
 My active heart still keeps its pristine flame ;
 The object alter'd, the desire the same.

This younger, fairer, pleads her rightful charms,
 With present power compels me to her arms ;
 And much I fear from my subjected mind,
 (If beauty's force to constant love can bind)
 That years may roll ere in her turn the maid
 Shall weep the fury of my love decay'd,
 And weeping follow me, as thou dost now,
 With idle clamours of a broken vow.

Nor can the wildness of thy wishes err
 So wide to hope that thou may'st live with her :
 Love, well thou know'st, no partnership allows ;
 Cupid, averse, rejects divided vows :

Then from thy foolish heart, vain maid, remove }
 An useless sorrow and an ill-starr'd love, [rove. }
 And leave me, with the fair, at large in woods to }

EMMA. Are we in life through one great error led ?
 Is each man perjnr'd, and each nymph betray'd ?
 Of the superior sex art thou the worst ?
 Am I of mine the most completely curst ?
 Yet let me go with thee, and going prove,
 From what I will endure, how much I love.

This potent beauty, this triumphant fair,
 This happy object of our different care,
 Her let me follow ; her let me attend,
 A servant ; (she may scorn the name of friend)
 What she demands incessant I'll prepare ;
 I'll weave her garlands, and I'll plait her hair :
 My busy diligence shall deck her board,
 (For there, at least, I may approach my lord)
 And when her Henry's softer hours advise
 His servant's absence, with dejected eyes
 Far I'll recede, and sighs forbid to rise. }

Yet when increasing grief brings slow disease,
 And ebbing life, on terms severe as these,
 Will have its little lamp no longer fed ;
 When Henry's mistress shows him Emma dead,
 Rescue my poor remains from vile neglect :
 With virgin honours let my hearse be deck'd,
 And decent emblem ; and, at least, persuade
 This happy nymph that Emma may be laid
 Where thou, dear author of my death, where she
 With frequent eye my sepulchre may see.
 The nymph, amidst her joys, may haply breathe
 One pious sigh, reflecting on my death,
 And the sad fate which she may one day prove,
 Who hopes from Henry's vows eternal love.

And thou forsworn, thou cruel as thou art,
 If Emma's image ever touch'd thy heart,
 Thou sure must give one thought, and drop one tear
 To her whom love abandon'd to despair ;
 To her who, dying, on the wounded stone
 Bid it in lasting characters be known
 That, of mankind, she lov'd but thee alone. }

HEN. Hear, solemn Jove, and, conscious Venus
 hear ;

And thou, bright maid, believe me whilst I swear ;
 No time, no change, no future flame, shall move
 The well-plac'd basis of my lasting love.
 O powerful virtue ! O victorious fair !
 At least excuse a trial too severe ;
 Receive the triumph, and forget the war. }

No banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove,
 Entreats thy pardon, and implores thy love :
 No perjur'd knight desires to quit thy arms,
 Fairest collection of thy sex's charms,
 Crown of my love, and honour of my youth ;
 Henry, thy Henry, with eternal truth,
 As thou may'st wish, shall all his life employ,
 And found his glory in his Emma's joy.

In me behold the potent Edgar's heir,
 Illustrious earl ; him terrible in war
 Let Loyre confess, for she has felt his sword,
 And trembling fled before the British lord.
 Him great in peace and wealth fair Deva knows,
 For she amidst his spacious meadows flows,
 Inclines her urn upon his fatten'd lands,
 And sees his numerous herds imprint her sands.

And thou, my fair, my dove, shalt raise thy thought
 To greatness next to empire : shalt be brought

With solemn pomp to my paternal seat,
 Where peace and plenty on thy word shall wait :
 Music and song shall wake the marriage-day,
 And while the priests accuse the bride's delay, }
 Myrtles and roses shall obstruct her way.

Friendship shall still thy evening feasts adorn,
 And blooming Peace shall ever bless thy morn :
 Succeeding years their happy race shall run,
 And Age unheeded by delight come on,
 While yet superior love shall mock his power ;
 And when old Time shall turn the fated hour,
 Which only can our well-tied knot unfold,
 What rests of both, one sepulchre shall hold.

Hence, then, for ever, from my Emma's breast
 (That heaven of softness, and that seat of rest)
 Ye doubts and fears, and all that know to move }
 Tormenting grief, and all that trouble love ;
 Scatter'd by winds recede, and wild in forests rove. }

EMMA. O day! the fairest snre that ever rose !
 Period and end of anxious Emma's woes !
 Sire of her joy, and source of her delight, }
 O! wing'd with pleasure take thy happy flight,
 And give each future morn a tincture of thy white. }
 Yet tell thy votary, potent queen of Love,
 Henry, my Henry, will he never rove ?
 Will he be ever kind, and just, and good ?
 And is there yet no mistress in the wood ?
 None, none there is : the thought was rash and vain,
 A false idea, and a fancied pain.
 Doubt shall for ever quit my strengthen'd heart,
 And anxious jealousy's corroding smart ;
 Nor other inmate shall inhabit there,
 But soft belief, young joy, and pleasing care.

Hence let the tides of plenty ebb and flow,
 And Fortune's various gale unheeded blow.
 If at my feet the suppliant goddess stands,
 And sheds her treasure with unwearied hands,
 Her present favour cautious I'll embrace,
 And not unthankful use the proffer'd grace ;
 If she reclaims the temporary boon,
 And tries her pinions, fluttering to be gone ;
 Secure of mind, I'll obviate her intent,
 And, unconcern'd, return the goods she lent.
 Nor happiness can I, nor misery, feel,
 From any turn of her fantastic wheel :
 Friendship's great laws, and Love's superior powers,
 Must mark the colour of my future hours.
 From the events which thy commands create
 I must my blessings or my sorrows date,
 And Henry's will must dictate Emma's fate. }

Yet while with close delight and inward pride
 (Which from the world my careful soul shall hide)
 I see thee, lord and end of my desire,
 Exalted high as virtue can require,
 With power invested, and with pleasure cheer'd,
 Sought by the good, by the oppressor fear'd,
 Loaded and bless'd with all the affluent store
 Which human vows at smoking shrines implore ;
 Grateful and humble grant me to employ
 My life, subservient only to thy joy ;
 And at my death, to bless thy kindness, shown
 To her who, of mankind, could love but thee alone.

WHILE thus the constant pair alternate said,
 Joyful above them and around them play'd
 Angels and sportive Loves, a numerous crowd ;
 Smiling they clap'd their wings, and low they bow'd.

They tumbled all their little quivers o'er,
To choose propitious shafts a precious store,
That when their god should take his future darts,
To strike (however rarely) constant hearts,
His happy skill might proper arms employ,
All tipt with pleasure, and all wing'd with joy :
And those, they vow'd, whose lives should imitate
These lovers' constancy, should share their fate.

The queen of Beauty stop'd her bridled doves,
Approv'd the little labour of the Loves ;
Was proud and pleas'd the mutual vow to hear, }
And to the triumph call'd the god of War :
Soon as she calls, the god is always near. }

' Now Mars, (she said) let Fame exalt her voice,
Nor let thy conquests only be her choice ;
But when she sings great Edward from the field }
Return'd, the hostile spear and captive shield }
In Concord's temple hung, and Gallia taught to
yield. }

And when, as prudent Saturn shall complete
The years design'd to perfect Britain's state,
The swift-wing'd Power shall take her trump
again,

To sing her favourite Anna's wondrous reign ;
To recollect unwearied Marlborough's toils,
Old Rufus' hall unequal to his spoils ;
The British soldier from his high command
Glorious, and Gaul thrice vanquish'd by his hand :
Let her at least perform what I desire ;
With second breath the vocal brass inspire ;
And tell the Nations in no vulgar strain,
What wars I manage, and what wreaths I gain.
And when thy tumults and thy fights are past ;
And when thy laurels at my feet are cast ;

Faithful may'st thou, like British Henry, prove ;
And Emma-like let me return thy love.

Renown'd for truth, let all thy sons appear ;
And constant Beauty shall reward their care.

Mars smil'd, and bow'd : the Cyprian deity
Turn'd to the glorious Ruler of the sky ;
' And thou', she smiling said, ' great God of days
And verse, behold my deed, and sing my praise,
As on the British earth, my favourite isle,
Thy gentle rays and kindest influence smile,
Through all her laughing fields and verdant groves,
Proclaim with joy these memorable Loves.
From every annual course let one great day,
To celebrated sports and floral play
Be set aside ; and in the softest lays
Of thy poetic sons, be solemn praise
And everlasting marks of honour paid,
'To the true lover, and the Nut-brown Maid.'

ON

THE MARRIAGE

OF GEORGE PRINCE OF DENMARK AND THE LADY
ANNE ¹.

1683.

CONJUNCTUM Veneri Martem, Danosque Britannis
 Dum canit altisonis docta caterva modis,
 Affero sincerum culto pro carmine votum,
 Quod minus ingenii, plus pietatis habet.
 Vivant Ambo diu, vivant feliciter, opto ;
 Diligat hic Sponsam, diligat illa Virum,
 Junctos perpetuâ teneas, Hymenæe, catenâ ;
 Junctos, Juno, die protege ; nocte, Venus !
 Exultent simili felices prole Parentes,
 Ut petat hinc multos natio bina duces !
 Cumque senes pariter cupiant valedicere terris,
 Nè mors augustum dividat atra jugum :
 Sed qualis raptum transvexit currus Elijam,
 Transvehat ad superas talis utrumque domos !
 A. PRIOR, *Coll. Div. Joh. Alumn.*

¹ From the 'Hymenæus Cantabrigiensis. Cantabrigiæ, 1683.' This copy, notwithstanding the signature, is beyond a doubt the property of the facetious Mat Prior. The distant imitation of Martial's admirable lines on the *Happy Married Pair*—or rather the *allusion* to that excellent little piece (for it can hardly be called an *imitation* of it) shows the *taste* of a *master* at the *years* of a *boy*, and is not unworthy the *name* or the *fame* of Prior.